

# INDIAN ART AND LETTERS

SECOND ISSUE FOR 1936.

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# INDIAN ART AND LETTERS

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NEW SERIES. VOL. X., NO. 2

SECOND ISSUE FOR 1936

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## THE EXPLORATION OF SRI DEVA, AN ANCIENT INDIAN CITY IN INDOCHINA<sup>1</sup>

BY DR. H. G. QUARITCH WALES

(Field Director of the Greater-Indian Research Committee)

### I. INTRODUCTION

THE second expedition organized by the Greater-Indian Research Committee was carried out during the winter of 1935-36 and was made possible by the generous support of Mrs. C. N. Wrentmore, a member of the India Society. The Siamese Government kindly afforded every facility and assistance, and the work in the field was throughout shared with me by my wife.

Our main objective was the exploration of the ancient city of Śrī Deva (pronounced Śi T'ep in Siam), and also known locally as Mu'o'ng Āp'hāisali. In order to make my account as complete a monograph as possible, as also in order to explain my reasons for undertaking this research, I shall bring together in this introductory section what little information was available before we began our investigations, though considerations of space forbid me to reproduce the published photographs of those objects that had already been brought to Bangkok from Śrī Deva.

The ancient city is situated about five miles from the left bank of the Pasāk River, and is marked on Siamese maps as being approximately in latitude 15° 27' North and longitude 101° 12' East (see map, Fig. 1). This river flows through a narrow valley, never more than twenty-five miles broad, between the P'eč'ābun hills and the escarpment of the K'orat plateau. It runs in a steep gorge and is frequently blocked with boulders and fallen trees which, with the presence of rapids, make it practically unnavigable except at the season of the highest waters, when boats of moderate size can reach

<sup>1</sup> Based on a lecture delivered at the Royal Society on June 23, 1936. Sir Francis Young-husband, Chairman of the Greater-Indian Research Committee, presided.

# The Exploration of Sri Deva

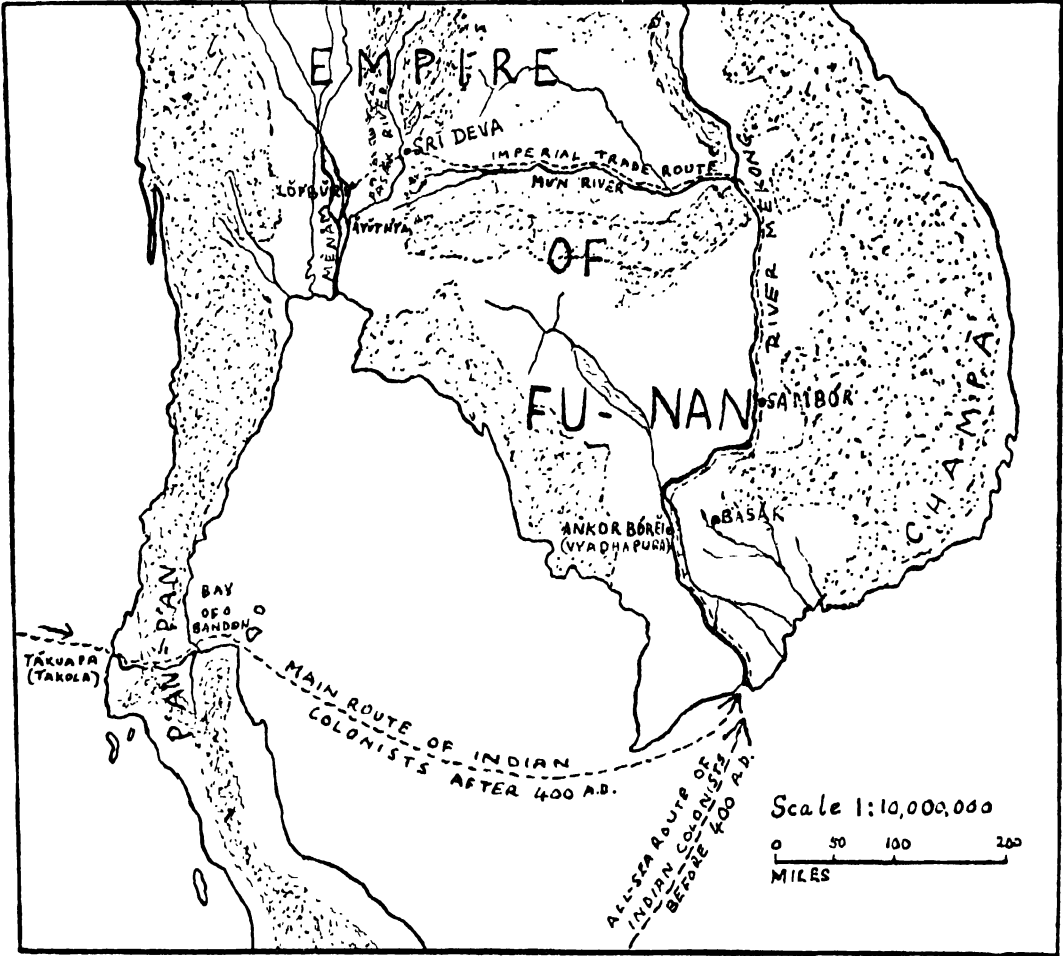


FIG. 1.—MAP OF PART OF INDOCHINA SHOWING POSITION OF SRI DEVA.

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Kêngk'ôi, at which point the Pasāk flows out into the valley of the Mênăm and eventually joins this river at Āyūth'ya.

The relative inaccessibility of the Pasāk valley, coupled perhaps with its unenviable reputation for fever, seems to account for the fact that prior to our coming the city of Śrī Deva had never been visited by a European archæologist. And yet its unhealthy climate is the very factor which brought about the discovery of the city, an event which occurred as long ago as 1905, and was due to the indefatigable attention to duty of H.R.H. Prince Damrong Rājanubhāb. Quite recently, at his house in Penang, he gave me the details of this discovery. It appears that at that time the province of P'ēc'ābun, which includes the greater part of the Pasāk valley, was considered so unhealthy that it was difficult to find officials willing to accept administrative posts in this region. And so it came about that Prince Damrong, being then Minister of the Interior, resolved to make a tour of the province in order to make a personal inquiry into conditions there. He set out from P'ṣṇūlok with the object of reaching P'ēc'ābun town, the headquarters of the province of that name. But as soon as he reached the hills which form the watershed between the valleys of the Mênăm and Pasāk rivers, he encountered his first difficulties in that the men he had brought from P'ṣṇūlok refused to cross into the Pasāk valley. At length he persuaded them to follow his example and risk the journey, and in due course he reached P'ēc'ābun town. He then continued his journey southward along the valley of the Pasāk until he reached a large village named Ban Wíc'ien. Being, of course, interested in archæology, Prince Damrong here inquired if there were any ancient remains in the vicinity, but apparently no one had any information to give on the subject. The behaviour of the people when questioned was such that the Prince suspected that they were withholding information for fear of being obliged to act as his guides, for, as he afterwards found, the actual neighbourhood of Śrī Deva had such an exceedingly evil reputation that even people who resided in the Pasāk valley at no great distance away would not go near the ancient city. Then Prince Damrong called the villagers together and pointed out to them that it was a national duty to inform the government of the existence of any ancient remains. At last one man stepped forward and said that there were ruins two days' journey further south. "Then lead me there," said Prince Damrong, and within that time he reached Śrī Deva. He stayed three days, sufficient only to make a superficial examination, and then passed on down the valley to continue his official tour. Two years later, in 1907, Mr. F. H. Giles, as he told me recently in Bangkok, also travelled down the Pasāk valley on an official journey in the course of which he actually entered the city of Śrī Deva. But, not being then as interested in archæological

## *The Exploration of Śrī Deva*

matters as he afterwards became, he took no particular note of what he saw.

The first mention of Śrī Deva in print occurs in 1909,<sup>1</sup> Lajonquière having seen a statue originating from this city in the museum at Āyūth'ya. But this always careful observer was himself unable to make the journey to Śrī Deva, and the hearsay information he placed on record is too inaccurate to be worth reproducing here. In 1916 a certain C. S. Braddock<sup>2</sup> published a photograph of the Khmer *dvārapāla* (giant) from Śrī Deva that was afterwards brought to the Bangkok Museum.

In February, 1925, Śrī Deva narrowly missed being visited by Lieut.-Colonel J. P. Andersen, a Danish officer of the Siamese provincial gendarmerie, when on an official tour to the valley, which he reached from Lōp'būri by the route we afterwards followed. "Some distance from Bua Chum," he wrote, "towards the east are the sites of other old towns, Muang Nong-yai-daw and Muang Poendin-tong. The villagers declared that there was nothing to see there, and as it was too much out of my way, I did not go to these places. But to my regret I now discovered that at Ban Na-ta-krut I had missed the best of all. Only between two and three kilometres east of the village are the ruins of an ancient city called Muang Apaisalee [Śrī Deva]. The people of Bua Chum, who pretended to know about the place, said there were ruins of buildings and walls, and that broken statuary was lying about in the jungle. The account they gave me seemed exaggerated, but was corroborated by the guide and another man who had come with me from Ban Na-ta-krut. It was not blessings I, in my thoughts, sent the people of Ban Na-ta-krut; not one of them had mentioned a word about this to myself or any of my men when I was in their village. However, it could not be helped; to go back was out of the question, so after having spent the next day in Bua Chum, I continued my south-west journey on Friday, the 13th of February."<sup>3</sup> Knowing the reticence of the local people on the subject of Śrī Deva, only penetrated by Prince Damrong himself with considerable difficulty, one can sympathize with the Lieutenant-Colonel for having missed so much.

A torso of the same type as that seen by Lajonquière and also originating from Śrī Deva was preserved for some years in the Ministry of Interior at Bangkok, and these two pieces, together with three more collected at Śrī Deva by the local officials acting on the orders of Prince Damrong during the years 1926-1929, were finally placed in the National Museum after that institution had been founded in 1926. One of these Indian images was published

<sup>1</sup> *B.C.A.I.*, 1909, pp. 198-200, and Fig. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *The Royal Sala of Siam*, in the *Log of the Circumnavigators' Club*, Jan.-Feb., 1916, p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> *J.S.S.*, Vol. XX., p. 162.



## The Exploration of Sri Deva

by M. Cœdès in *Ars Asiatica*, XII., 1928, while he published the others in *Mélanges Linossier*, 1932. These sculptures are as follows :

No. 1. Male torso, height 1 ft. 4½ in., *Mélanges Linossier*, Plate XII (right).

No. 2. Fragmentary male figure, height 3 ft. 2½ in., *Mélanges Linossier*, Plate XII (left).

No. 3. Torso of *yakṣī* [?], height 2 ft. 4¼ in., *Ars Asiatica*, XII, Plate VII.

No. 4. Male figure, height 6 ft. 10¼ in., *Mélanges Linossier*, Plate X.

No. 5. Male figure, height 3 ft. 11½ in., *Mélanges Linossier*, Plate XI.

In his *Note sur quelques sculptures de Srideb*,<sup>1</sup> M. Cœdès has described in detail the characteristics and affinities of these sculptures. He remarks that from the purely æsthetic point of view they are in every way remarkable works of art. They are the productions of artists in full possession of the technique of their medium, while the beauty of their modelling and the ease and nobility of their posture place them amongst the finest Indian sculptures in Indochina. In comparing them with the earliest Primitive Khmer (Pre-Khmer) images, M. Cœdès notices the following differences : The costume, so clearly represented in Primitive Khmer statues, is here barely indicated ; the headdress, instead of being completely cylindrical, is flattened behind or is vaguely octagonal ; the head, with its massive features, is mounted on a bull-neck such as is never seen in a Primitive Khmer statue ; the thighs, more clearly detached from one another, recall the Indian anatomy ; but above all one is struck by the triple flexion of the body, and indeed one must go to India or Java to find such a clear application of the *tribhanga* formula.

M. Cœdès thus clearly distinguishes these sculptures from the earliest Primitive Khmer images, and, in remarking how clearly they recall the Indian canon of the Gupta period, he considers that they date from the fifth or sixth century A.D. He goes on to say that their presence in the heart of Indochina is a sure guarantee that at the same epoch similar images must have existed in neighbouring countries ; and he states that in helping us to form an idea of the nature of the statuary of Fu-nan, which, apart perhaps from the Buddhas of Añkor Bórĭ,<sup>2</sup> has been submerged by Khmer statuary, they furnish the link that was missing between the latter and the Indian sculpture of the Gupta period. The finding of these early sculptures so far from the sea, in a valley difficult of access, led M. Cœdès to marvel at the force of the expansion of Indian civilization, which had not only touched the coasts, as one would have

<sup>1</sup> *Mélanges Linossier*, pp. 159-164.

<sup>2</sup> Groslier, "Note sur la sculpture khmère ancienne," in *Études Asiatiques*, Vol. I., pp. 297-314.

## The Exploration of Sri Deva

been tempted to believe, but had pushed as far as the centre of Indochina, with its learned language, its writing, its religion and its art. And he wonders whether Śrī Deva was a vassal state of Fu-nan or an independent kingdom.

Before leaving the subject of the Indian sculptures that were already known from Śrī Deva, I shall take the opportunity of here placing on record the existence of a sixth sculpture which is housed in the Bangkok National Museum, but does not appear to have been published. For that reason I publish it here (Plate III, 3) as No. 6, male figure, with nimbus, height 3 ft. 2 $\frac{3}{8}$  in.

Lajonquière was the first to draw attention to a fragmentary stone inscription which he saw in Bangkok and erroneously described as a *līṅga* originating from C'āiya.<sup>1</sup> It was subsequently shown that the stone in fact came from Śrī Deva, but the Siamese claim that this nail-shaped object represents a *lāk mu'o'ng*, or foundation stone of the city, appears to be baseless. M. Finot<sup>2</sup> assigned this inscription to the fifth or sixth century, an opinion with which M. Cœdès<sup>3</sup> agrees. In a recent article, Dr. B. Ch. Chhabra<sup>4</sup> assigns the record to the fifth century, but, as we shall see later, Dr. L. D. Barnett prefers the first quarter of the sixth century. The text does not yield any coherent sense, but Dr. Chhabra remarks that the mention of Kānīnaṛṣi (*i.e.*, Vyāsa) points at least to its Brahmanical nature.

Besides the Indian inscription and the sculptures enumerated, the *dvārapāla* above mentioned<sup>5</sup> of the style of the Bayon was also brought from Śrī Deva, and this enabled M. Cœdès rightly to conclude that the city had been reoccupied by the Khmers at a late period. A fragment of a statue of Nandi, also in the Bangkok Museum, is another object of Khmer workmanship from Śrī Deva.

One can appreciate the regret which M. Cœdès tells us he feels that during his residence in Siam circumstances were continually opposed to his visiting a site which had always excited his curiosity. In 1931 another French archæologist, M. Clæys,<sup>6</sup> when making a tour of Siam, recognized the primordial importance of the sculptures from Śrī Deva, at the same time regretting that a site so difficult of access was beyond the reach of archæologists *en mission*. But it was clear that the remarkable nature of the sculptures amply justified the organization of a special expedition with the object of discovering what architectural and other ancient remains might exist at Śrī Deva; and it was such an expedition that last winter I was privileged to carry out.

<sup>1</sup> *B.C.A.I.*, 1909, p. 228.

<sup>3</sup> *Mélanges Linossier*, p. 162.

<sup>5</sup> *Mélanges Linossier*, Pl. XIV.

<sup>2</sup> *B.C.A.I.*, 1910, p. 152, No. 16.

<sup>4</sup> *J.A.S.B.*, Letters, Vol. I., 1935, p. 55, and Pl. VII.

<sup>6</sup> *L'Archéologie du Siam*, p. 42.

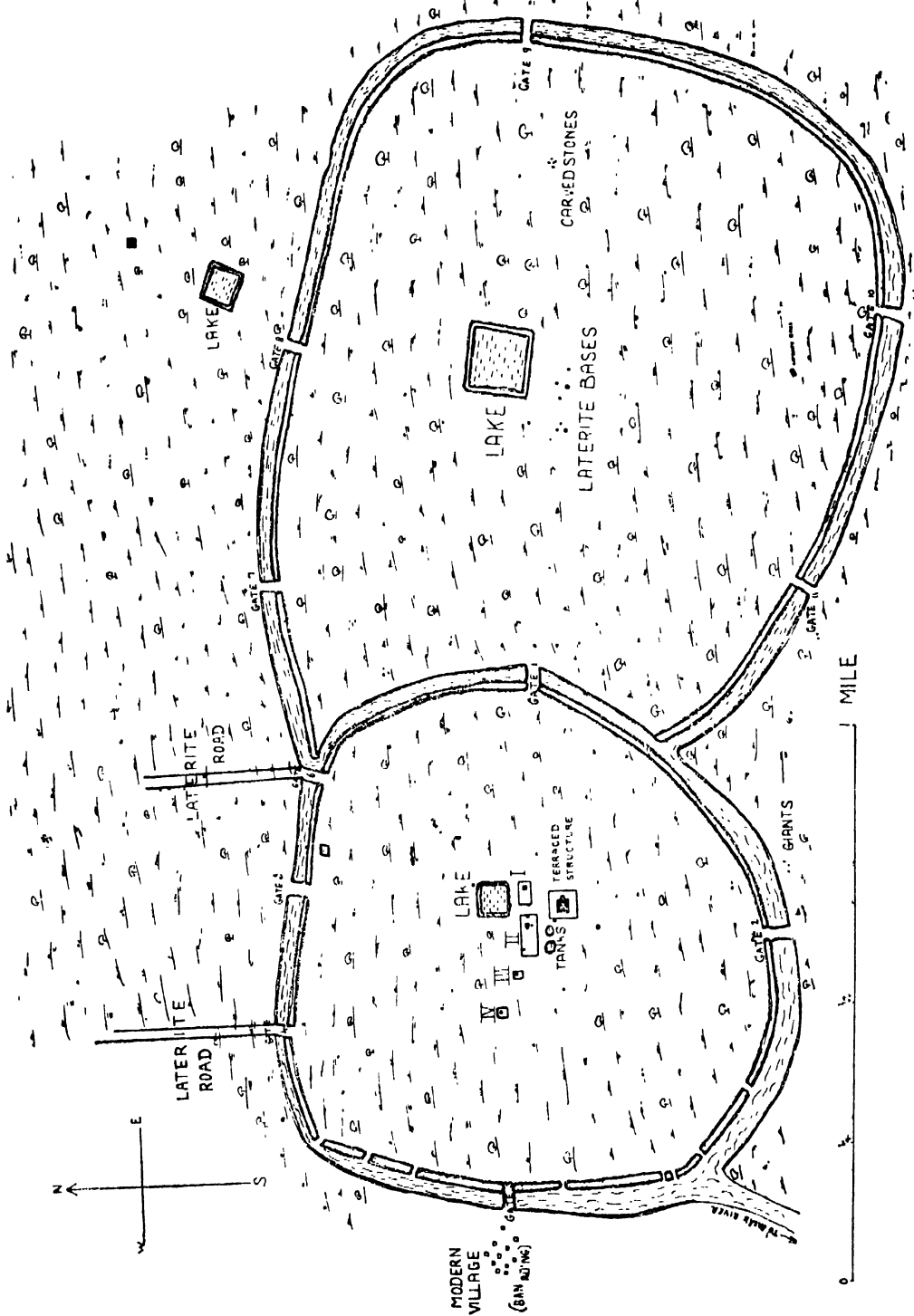


FIG. 2.—PLAN OF THE CITY OF SRI DEVA.

## The Exploration of Sri Deva

### II. THE ANCIENT CITY

I shall not here dilate on the details of the journey, all the space at my disposal being required for archæological matters. I need only give the salient facts : We started north-eastwards from Löp'būri on February 14, 1936, with two motor-lorries. At K'ok Sāmrong, however, after the first day's journey, these had to be exchanged for bullock-carts, the unusually late rains having made the use of lorries impossible after that point. Then followed a slow and rather difficult journey lasting five days, across a thin and monotonous jungle of deciduous trees just bursting into leaf, the ground being swampy for the first two days, afterwards dry and sandy or stony. On the third day the P'ěč'ābun hills were crossed by a low but rocky pass, and on the fourth the Pasāk gorge was negotiated, Śrī Deva being reached on the fifth day. In the height of the dry season, or even in January or February after a season of normal rains, the Pasāk valley could probably be reached from Löp'būri in two days by lorry, though unless the cart track is put into better condition a few places might cause trouble *en route*. Bullock-carts would then only be required for the last few miles of the journey, a state of affairs that must persist until the Pasāk river is spanned by a properly constructed bridge.

The city of Śrī Deva lies in thin laterite jungle, except on its western side, where there is a considerable area of padi land cultivated by the villagers of Ban Bū'ng. I shall now describe the main features of the city as shown on the plan (Fig. 2), which we made from a compass traverse, and which is, of course, only approximately accurate. An aerial survey, which I hope may some day be made, would be a very valuable and eminently desirable further elucidation. The plan of the city is unlike that of any other in Indo-China and is typically Indian. But it should be added that none of the Primitive Khmer cities of Cambodia, some of which might be expected to follow this plan, appear as yet to have been mapped. It consists of a main city, about a mile square, on to the eastern side of which has been built a subsidiary city of considerably greater area. It is obvious at a glance that the larger city is the subsidiary one, if for no other reason because its ramparts abut on to the original moat of the smaller city and it has no western rampart of its own. This method of extending an Indian city by building a large ward or *mahalla* on to one side of the existing city was technically known in architectural treatises as *dāmaḍa*. The new enclosure was intended either to accommodate the lower castes expelled from the main city, or else as an emporium. In India the city of Purī is believed to furnish an example of this type of extension.<sup>1</sup> Both the main and subsidiary cities are surrounded by a rampart of earth and laterite, about 20 feet high, 60 to 90 feet broad at the

<sup>1</sup> B. B. Dutt, *Town Planning in Ancient India*, 1925, p. 134.

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## The Exploration of Sri Deva

base, and 15 to 30 feet broad at the top. No doubt the rampart was originally surmounted by a stockade, and the surface of the rampart is in many places littered with coarse potsherds, probably indicating the sites of the dwellings of the soldiers who guarded the city. The south-eastern part of the rampart of the main city is low or almost non-existent, it having no doubt been either allowed to fall into disrepair or intentionally reduced in height after the subsidiary city had been built. The moat varies in breadth up to 300 feet. The water was stagnant, but we were informed that in the rainy season the surplus water flows out by the stream which leaves the south-west corner of the main city and flows into the Pasāk river. The main city was presumably intended to be square, a shape that was considered to be the best for cities in ancient India, but though the *sthapati*, or master-builder, was always careful to fix the position of the main gates at the cardinal points, the workmen usually did their best to cut off the corners. The gates, now represented merely by gaps in the rampart, are numbered 1 to 11 on the plan, and are usually about 60 feet wide. The original gates of the main city are probably those at the cardinal points, the two additional ones on the northern side having probably been opened by the Khmers, since broad laterite roads, raised 3 feet above flood level, lead some distance towards a Khmer terraced structure situated about 1½ miles north of the main city. Some of the gates have local names, among which may be mentioned the Water Gate (No. 8) and the Gate of the Dead (No. 10). The moat opposite the gates is in every case spanned by earth causeways, but all trace of water channels through these causeways has long since disappeared. The western rampart is pierced by a number of narrow breaks probably intended to carry off the city drainage, the slope of the land being in that direction. Near the centre of the subsidiary city there is a lake about 200 yards broad, surrounded by a low embankment, two other similarly constructed lakes, but only of about half the size of the one first mentioned, being situated near the centre of the main city and about 200 yards outside Gate 8 respectively.

The plan of the city as so far described, with the exception of Gates 4 and 6 with their laterite roads, seems to retain the original features of the Indian period. We must now be careful to distinguish between the monuments of the Indian and Khmer periods. We may dismiss the subsidiary city quite quickly because it contains no monuments other than a few laterite bases scattered along the site of what would appear to have been the main street running from west to east through the city. They are probably the basements of poor wooden temples frequented by the lower castes, and, whatever their period of origin, they were certainly adapted for use by the

## The Exploration of Sri Deva

Khmers, for in two or three cases *lingas* of Khmer type were found *in situ*. Towards Gate 9 were found a broken bas-relief and the remains of two stone pillars, all of Khmer workmanship, which undoubtedly belonged to one of the temples in the main city, and had at some time been transported to this spot and there deposited. They were held in high veneration by the villagers.

Turning now to the consideration of the main city, a noteworthy point is that, whereas the subsidiary city contains only open laterite jungle with tall forest trees and little undergrowth in the manner common to this district in general, the jungle of the main city consists largely of dense bamboo thickets, interspersed with larger trees. In accordance with the usual plan of Indian cities it would appear that the main temples, the council house and the palace were grouped together in the centre, the rest of the area having been given up to the wooden dwellings of the various castes. Of these, as of the council house and palace, no trace remains at Śrī Deva, owing to the perishable nature of the materials from which they were constructed, but a possible site for the palace is the western side of the lake, which does not appear to have been otherwise occupied. Along the northern side of the apparent site of the main street are a number of tower-like brick temples, built on extensive earth platforms raised about 3 feet above ground level, which platforms must also have accommodated numerous wooden pavilions, of which the laterite bases occasionally remain. Temple II was the chief sanctuary of the Indian period, situated at the centre of the city, but unfortunately only the lower parts of its walls remain, and it has been built over by a Khmer *prang*. To us, therefore, Temple I is the most important building, for it is purely Indian and remains in tolerably good preservation, and I shall have more to say about it in the next section. Nos. III and IV are ruined Khmer *prangs* of minor importance. South of Temple II are two small water tanks, and to the south-east of them rises a large terraced laterite structure, a kind of artificial mountain or Kailāsa, such as the Khmers liked to build at the centres of their cities. In this case the centre was already occupied, so they built it as near as they could. They also built a larger structure of the same kind outside the city about  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles north of Gate 5. Nearly half a mile south-east of this second laterite terraced structure are two lakes which were probably dug by the Khmers. About 450 yards north-east of Gate 8 there is a small laterite structure of Khmer origin, and about  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles north of that gate there is a well-preserved Khmer *prang*, known locally as the *prang ṛiṣi*, the hermit's tower, but to which I shall refer in future as Temple V.

We were able to trace the provenance of some of the Indian images that had previously been removed to the Bangkok Museum, and of which no exact record had been kept. The so-called *yakṣī* (No. 3) and one large male statue

(probably No. 4) had been found together lying outside the city in the jungle about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile east of Gate 9. Two other statues, presumably Nos. 5 and 6, were said to have been found a short distance outside Gate 3. It will be seen later that one of the statues found by us was also lying a considerable distance outside the city, and the evidence thus points to the conclusion that the Khmers, who were Śiva worshippers, had in many cases thrown the Vaiṣṇava Indian images out of the city and often mutilated them as well. The Khmer *dvārapālas*, however, of which one had been removed to the Bangkok Museum as already stated, and the fragments of several more of which were found by us outside Gate 2, had probably guarded the city gate in the manner of those at Añkor Thom.

The position of several of the objects found by us will be mentioned in later sections, but the opportunity may be taken here of dealing with a few small objects of uncertain period, to which it will not be necessary to refer again. It may be mentioned that even a place so remote as Śrī Deva had not entirely escaped the attention of the treasure-seekers, and the base of one or two of the Khmer *prangs* had been dug into, without success, we were told, by the local people. One man, however, showed us a place about 300 feet southwest of the Khmer terraced structure in the city, where there were the remains of a laterite structure and various worked stones. Here he indicated a spot where he had dug and found at a depth of about 3 feet a dozen crystal beads and a sheet of gold. Of these objects only two of the beads could be produced for inspection, and it is impossible to say to which period they belong. A small bronze fragment, length  $5\frac{1}{4}$  in. (Fig. 9), which a man said had been found lying on the ground near Temple I is probably of Khmer workmanship and may be a portion of the harness of a horse.

The position of one of the two small modern villages located in the vicinity will be observed on the plan, namely, Ban Bū'ng, situated just outside Gate 3, the other, Ban Śi T'ep, being situated about a quarter of a mile distant from the north-east corner of the subsidiary city. Both villages have their adjoining padi fields, but Ban Bū'ng would appear to have the pleasanter situation and a better water supply. Not knowing our relative position when we arrived, we encamped outside Gate 8 and remained there for the whole of our stay of three weeks, obtaining supplies and labour from Ban Śi T'ep and our water from the moat, which was then drying up, but appeared preferable to that which remained in the lake. But those who follow us to Śrī Deva may find a camp near Ban Bū'ng preferable, with its more adequate water supply and readier access to the main ruins. We noticed that while exceedingly voracious mosquitoes swarm near the water's edge, they give little trouble if one camps even as little as 50 yards from the water. We did not observe the

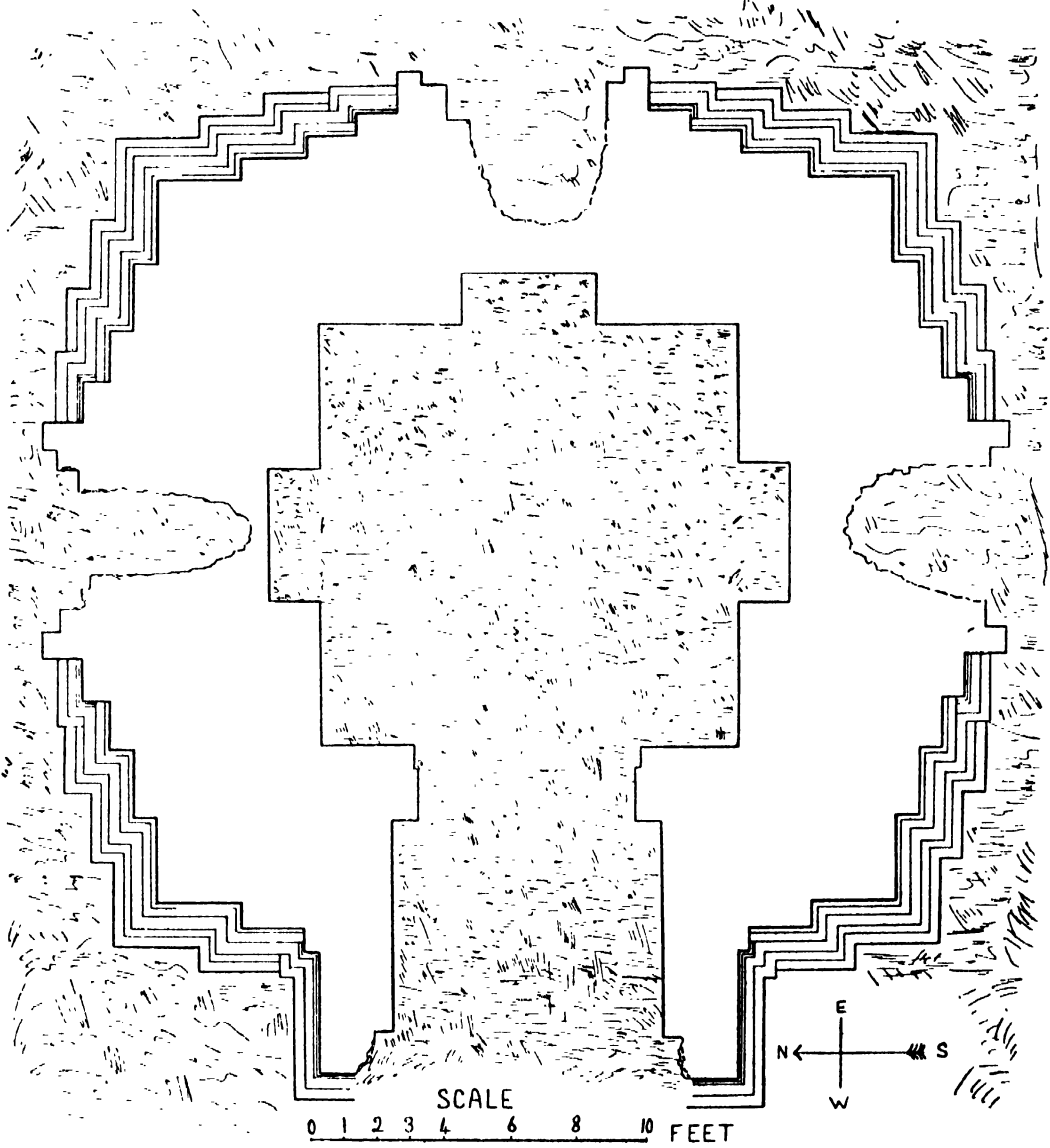


FIG. 3.—TEMPLE I: GROUND PLAN.

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presence of *Anopheles*, but the villagers confirmed the truth of the well-known saying that only those born in the Pasāk valley can tolerate a prolonged residence there.

### III. THE INDIAN BUILDINGS

I now propose to consider in some detail Temple I (Plates I and II), which, as I have said, is the only more or less complete building of the Indian period. Though almost the simplest possible sanctuary-tower, it is nevertheless an impressive structure of restrained and dignified architecture. Its dimensions and structural details are shown on the accompanying plan and section (Figs. 3 and 4). The building is erected on a rectangular laterite basement about 20 feet high, which though ruined shows signs of having been terraced, apparently with stairways at the cardinal points. At its foot this laterite basement measures 40 by 46 feet, its long axis running east to west. This basement stands towards the eastern end of an extensive earth platform raised 3 feet above ground level and measuring 200 by 146 feet, its long axis running east to west. The brick tower itself is about 40 feet high; that is to say, its summit is about 63 feet above ground level. It is square in plan with an entrance porch opening towards the west and three false porches on the other sides. The cornice is much ruined, and above that the tower consists of two receding stages of reduced height with false niches and other elements which repeat on a smaller scale the structural features of the main portion of the tower, and are reminiscent of a storied wooden building. The porches, true (Plate II, 1) and false, are in a ruinous condition, so that it is not possible to say whether originally there were pillars and lintels, but if there were these may have been of brick. The Khmers, in converting the shrine into a Śiva temple, put in stone door frames of the usual type, ringed octagonal pillars and a lintel of type III from which the central figure had been torn out (Plate VI, 3). But as all these objects have long ago fallen out of position and are lying near the foot of the laterite basement, the temple has almost its original Indian appearance. With them were found other pieces of Khmer stonework, including four broken wedge-shaped *pièces d'accent* (?), length of each, 3 ft. 5 in., ornamented with lotus-bud motives (Fig. 7), and fragments of the hemispherical stone cap, with a socket for a pointed terminal, which had crowned the tower in the Khmer period. Presumably in the Indian period the summit was closed by a corbelled vault. Traces of a coat of stucco remain on the outside of the building, but there is no sign of pilasters or other ornamentation (Plate II, 2). The bricks were well baked and better laid than those of the Khmer *prangs* at Śrī Deva, but not so well laid as those of Cham buildings. Typical measurements were  $12\frac{3}{4}'' \times 7'' \times 3''$ ;  $13'' \times 6\frac{3}{4}'' \times 2\frac{3}{4}''$ ;  $14'' \times 7\frac{1}{2}'' \times 4''$ , a size which recalls the Dvāravatī period bricks of P'ong Tūk

## *The Exploration of Sri Deva*

and Năk'ôn Păthôm, but is larger than those of any early site we examined in the Peninsula last year, except those of Khău P'ră No', a shrine which, as I shall have occasion to mention again later, I am now inclined to think possesses affinities with the Indian buildings of Śrī Deva.

We may now make an examination of the interior of the sanctuary which rises in *encorbellements successifs*, a system which, though it continues to be found in many buildings of advanced type, when found in staged buildings appears to me to be more primitive than the simple pyramidal vault, because it bears a definite relationship to the exterior stages of the building and thus recalls a period of wooden architecture during which these stages were real and not fictitious storeys. The first stage, or true sanctuary, rises about 21 feet 6 inches above the laterite floor, but at about half this height an encorbelled brick ledge runs round the interior of the sanctuary. This ledge supports the remains of a timber ceiling which thus had the effect of reducing by half what, but for what were evidently considered to be structural necessities, would appear to have been the available height of the sanctuary. Above this ceiling are wall sockets, some still containing the ends of rafters intended to strengthen the walls. At the bases of the upper stages there are also the remains of timber ceilings. Probably the original timbers were all replaced by the Khmers when they restored the building. There is a complete absence of such typical Primitive Khmer adjuncts as stone hooks for the support of the rafters, nor is there any sign of a *somasūtra* ever having existed. Such a typically Primitive Khmer appliance as the latter would have found no place in the originally Indian Vaiṣṇava shrine, nor would it have been installed by the Khmers of the classical period, in whose temples it is never found. A very important feature of the interior of Temple I, which, though considered here last, strikes one immediately one enters the sanctuary, is the presence of *niches lumineuses*, which I believe to be a most primitive feature (Plate II, 3). These are, in my opinion, a direct survival of wooden architectural forms, harking back to those wooden pavilions which, as befits a hot climate, were open to every breeze that blew, and which indeed may still be seen in any modern temple compound. When the transition to brick architecture took place it was necessary to fill in three of the entrances in order to support the weight of the building, but, though that closely related primitive feature the false porch survives into the latest periods of Indo-chinese architecture, the interior *niche lumineuse* survives only in some Primitive Khmer and some Cham buildings, never in Classical Khmer architecture.

To sum up, the most striking feature of this building is that it is completely lacking in all the distinguishing features of later forms of architecture in Indochina. Its generally simple and undifferentiated structure is such that

we must place it considerably earlier than any other known Hindu building in Indochina—that is to say, at latest the first quarter of the sixth century A.D. It is *not* Indochinese, but is definitely Indian; a fact which Dr. Stella Kramrisch immediately recognized when she was recently examining my photographs, and she considers that the building in India of which it is most strongly reminiscent is the brick temple at Bhitargaon in the Cawnpore district which dates from the fifth or sixth century. And it is very important for me to insist here that the early and purely Indian character of Temple I can be definitely established on architectural considerations *alone*. It is not necessary to fall back on the additional argument that Indian sculptures and inscriptions have also been found at Śrī Deva; and indeed such an argument would not certainly tend to strengthen my contention, because none of these objects is actually found *in situ* or in direct relationship to the building. To rely entirely on such an argument would allow room for the criticism that perhaps these undoubtedly Indian sculptures and inscriptions were housed in contemporary wooden buildings of which all trace has disappeared, the suggestion at the same time being made that Temple I is a Primitive Khmer structure of the seventh or eighth century. As it is, such a possible criticism has been disposed of by showing that the building lacks all the distinguishing features of even the most Primitive Khmer temple, but if an additional check is needed one might surely be justified in asking the supposed critic whether, had there been a Primitive Khmer period of occupation, one might not expect to find possibly an inscription of that period or at any rate at least one sculpture of Primitive Khmer type? As a matter of fact, besides definitely Indian sculptures and inscriptions, we find only sculptures of the Classical Khmer period of reoccupation.

It will now be of interest to compare Śrī Deva Temple I with Wāt Kêu, C'ăiya, Peninsular Siam, a building which I discussed last year.<sup>1</sup> Apart from resemblances of a general nature, it is particularly interesting to note the existence in Wāt Kêu of two early structural features that we have noticed at Śrī Deva—namely, the construction of the interior vault by means of *encorbellements successifs* and the presence of *niches lumineuses*.<sup>2</sup> I stated last year that I saw in Wāt Kêu and certain other temples at C'ăiya and Năk'ôn Śrī Th'ammārat the survival of an early Indian type of colonial architecture combining in itself the basic features of cubic Cham, Pre-Khmer and Javanese styles. However, these buildings have been much modified by a later wave of Indian colonization (see *infra*, p. 95) and by evolution, nor could they altogether have escaped the effects of reflux influences. But when examining

<sup>1</sup> INDIAN ART AND LETTERS, Vol. IX., No. 1, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Claeys, *Archéologie du Siam*, Fig. 43.

## The Exploration of Śrī Deva

them I did not expect that within little more than six months I should have the good fortune to find myself face to face with their earliest prototype, the former existence of which I had tacitly assumed. I now propose to regard Śrī Deva Temple I as an actually existing example of this prototype, the earliest ancestral form not only of the Pre-Khmer type, but also, as such connecting links as Phô-hài (situated north of the mouth of the Mekong) indicate, of Cham and Javanese architecture as well. It might be convenient to coin a distinguishing name for Śrī Deva Temple I and its associated Indian sculptures, together with the prototype of the buildings mentioned at C'āiya and Nak'ôn Śrī Th'ammārat and the prototypes of such sculptures as the Tākuapa and Wieng Srā Viṣṇu,<sup>1</sup> and I suggest the term "Art of Kaundinya." Kaundinya, of course, was the Indian Brahman who, according to the Liang Shu, journeyed via P'an-p'an, the state in the northern part of the Malay Peninsula, about the end of the fourth century A.D. to Fu-nan, where he was responsible for the complete Indianization of that country. This need not be taken too literally, but such a term as I propose vividly suggests the course via the Tākuapa-C'āiya transpeninsular route which Indian cultural expansion seems largely to have made use of from about this time, although it should be added that the "Art of Kaundinya" only represents a portion of that great movement of Indian culture which I shall characterize below (p. 91) as the "second wave."

I now approach the delicate task of challenging the generally accepted theory of so great an authority as M. Parmentier. In fact, I had already set forth upon this adventure last year,<sup>2</sup> but from the standpoint of general conviction only, whereas subsequent researches have put me in a position to marshal new and, I think, more definitely convincing facts. M. Parmentier sums up his views on the "Origine commune des Architectures Hindoues dans l'Inde et en Extrême-Orient"<sup>3</sup> in five clauses which I propose to quote *verbatim*:

"1. L'élément commun de tous les arts indiens d'Extrême-Orient : (a) est l'art ancien de l'Inde en construction légère ; (b) transporté dans sa forme primitive ou dans un des aspects successifs qu'il a pu prendre dans l'Inde.

"2. Cet art ainsi importé à des stades différents de son évolution, s'est développé plus ou moins dans chaque pays et suivant des conditions différentes.

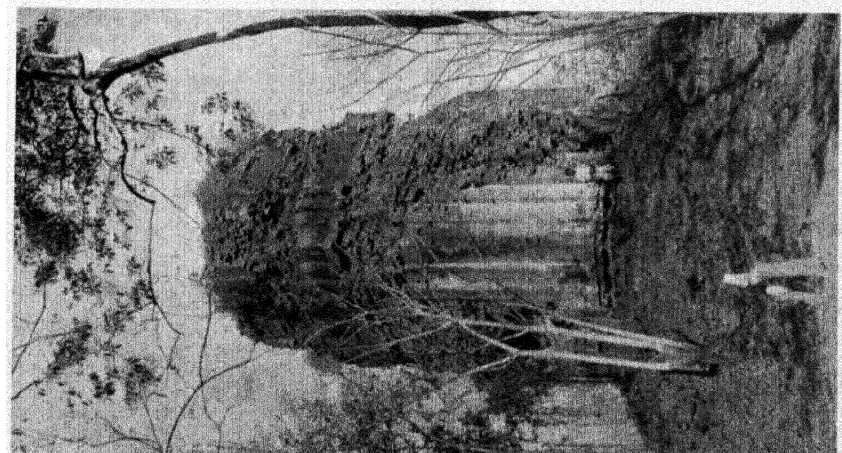
"3. Fixé dans une forme en matériaux durables, celle-ci a pu évoluer à son tour, tandis que l'art léger continuait à son côté, une existence parallèle et, ignoré de nous, a pu encore à l'occasion réagir sur la forme durable, la seule qui nous soit parvenue.

<sup>1</sup> INDIAN ART AND LETTERS, Vol. IX., Part 1, Plate II 1 ; *Ars Asiatica*, Vol. XII. Plate IX.

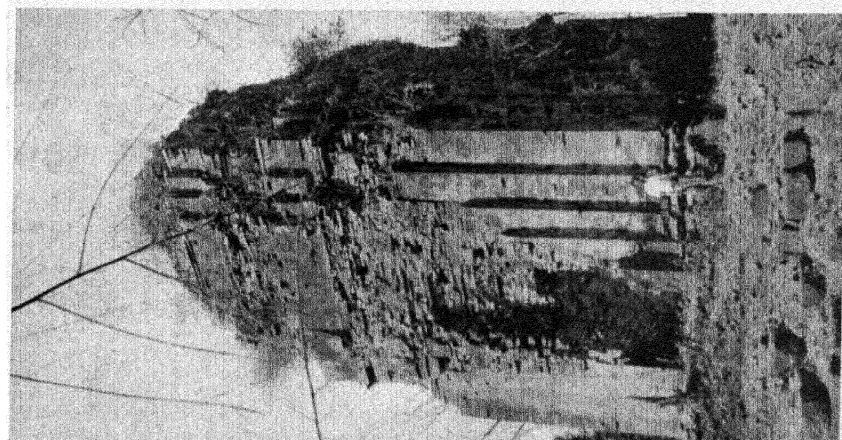
<sup>2</sup> INDIAN ART AND LETTERS, Vol. IX., Part 1, pp. 1-2.

<sup>3</sup> *Études Asiatiques*, Vol. II., pp. 218-219.

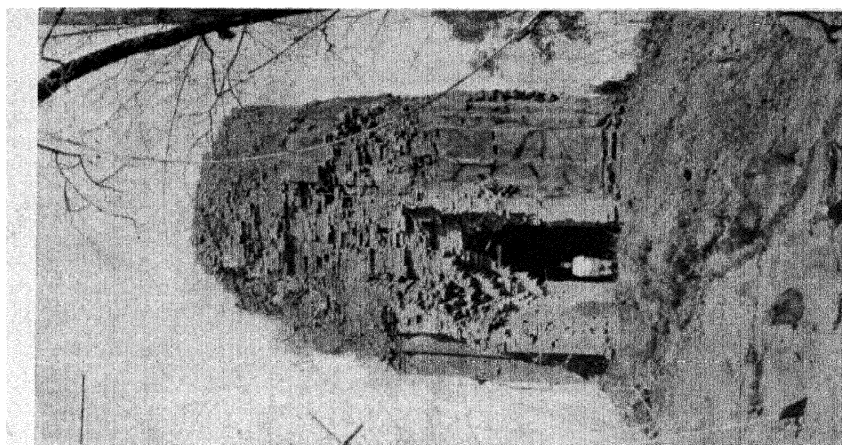




1.—TEMPLE 1: SOUTH-EAST CORNER.



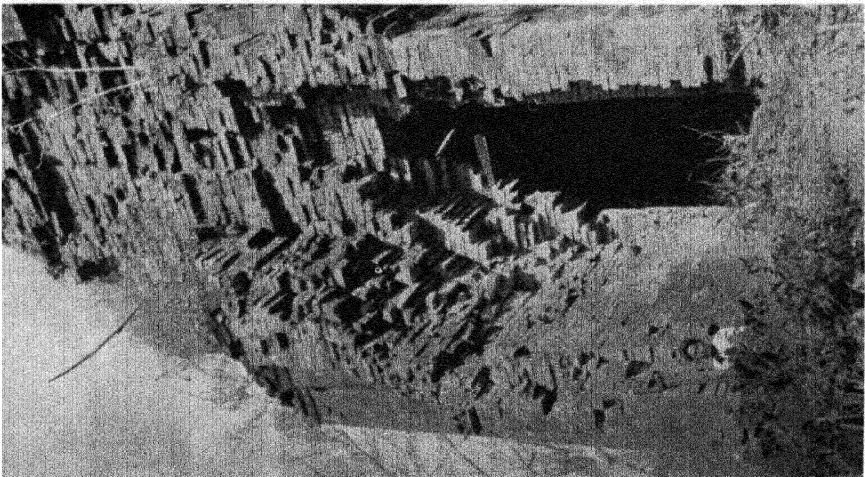
2.—TEMPLE 1: SHOWING EAST FALSE PORCH.



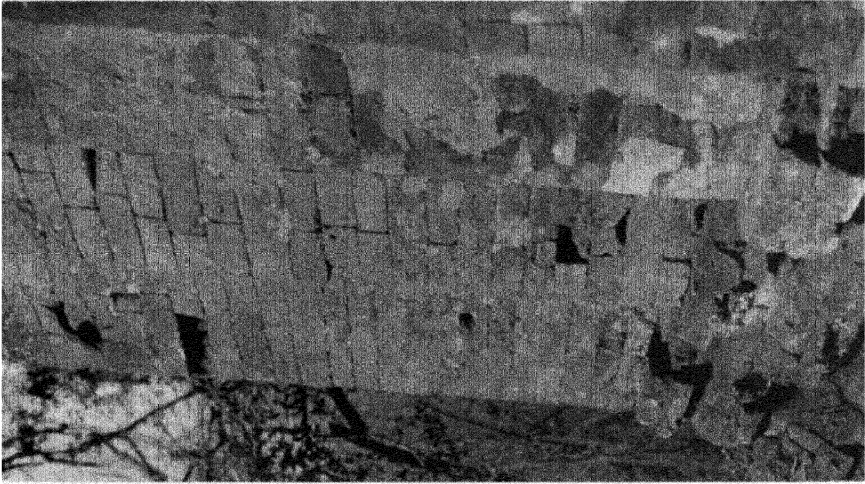
3.—TEMPLE 1: WEST FACE WITH TRUE PORCH.

The Exploration of Śrī Deva.

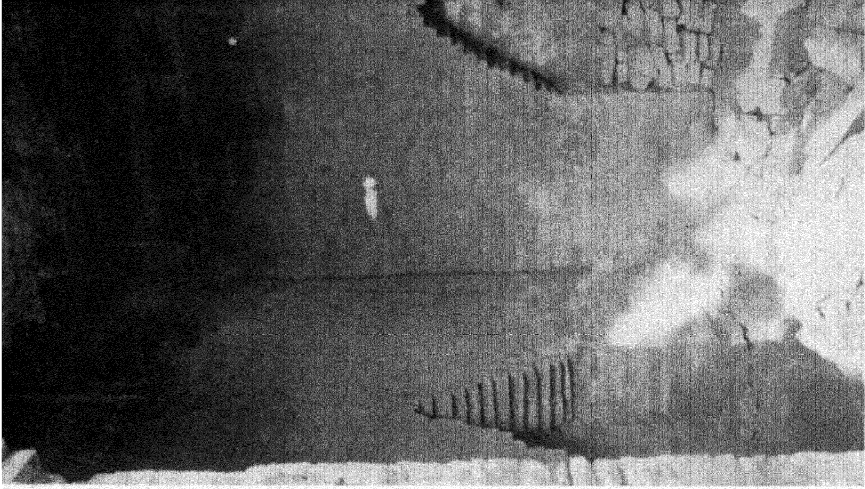
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1.—TEMPLE I : DETAIL OF THE PORCH.



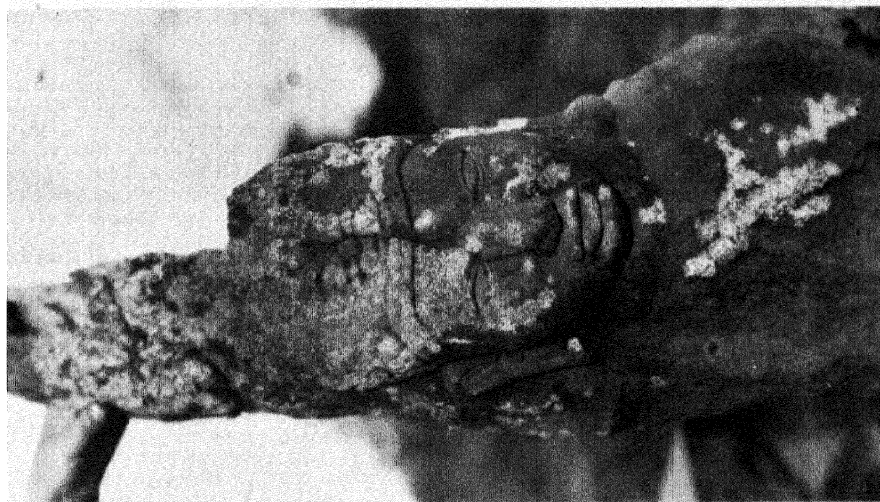
2.—TEMPLE I : DETAIL OF WALL AND PLINTH.



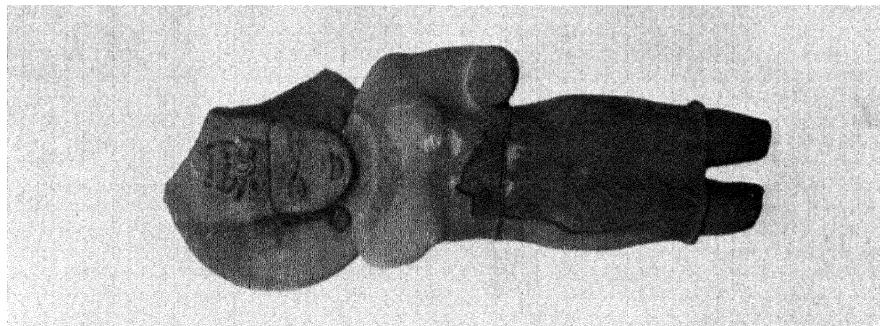
3.—TEMPLE I : INTERIOR, SHOWING  
*NICHES LUMINAIRES.*



1.—INDIAN IMAGE, NO. 10.

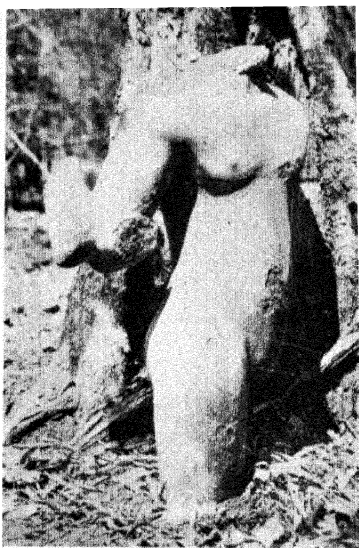


2.—INDIAN IMAGE, NO. 10.



3.—INDIAN IMAGE, NO. 6

PLATE IV

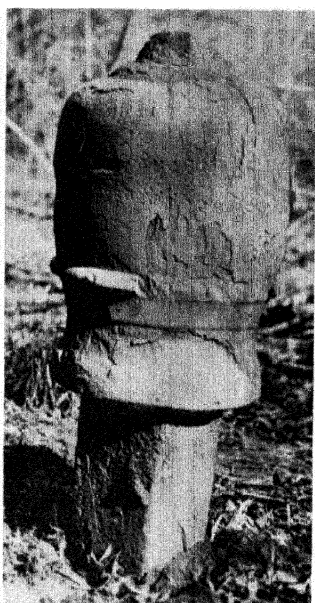


1.—INDIAN IMAGE, NO. 7.

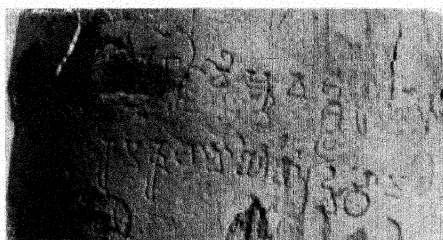


2.—INDIAN IMAGE, NO. 9.

The Exploration of Śrī Deva.



3.—INSCRIBED STONE PILLAR.



4.—PORTION OF THE SANSKRIT INSCRIPTION.



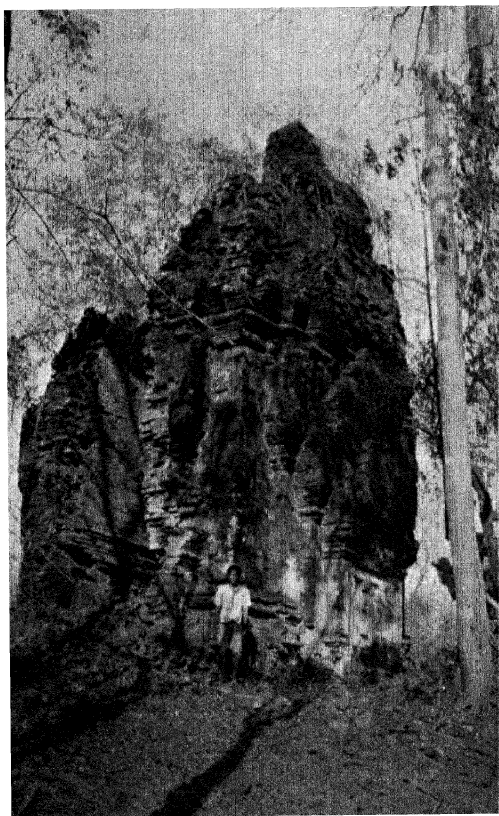
5.—CONTINUATION OF THE INSCRIPTION TO RIGHT.



6.—ISOLATED FRAGMENT OF INSCRIPTION.

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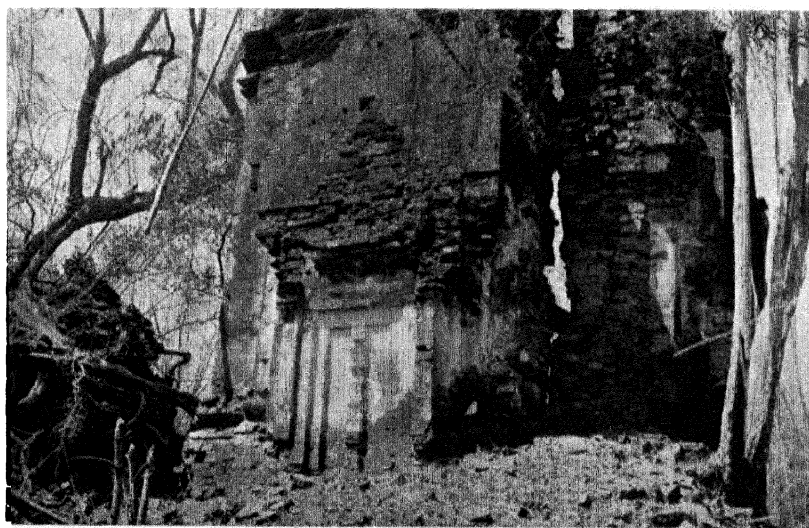




1.—TEMPLE II, FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.



2.—TEMPLE II: INTERIOR, SHOWING CONTRAST OF INDIAN AND KHMER BRICKWORK.

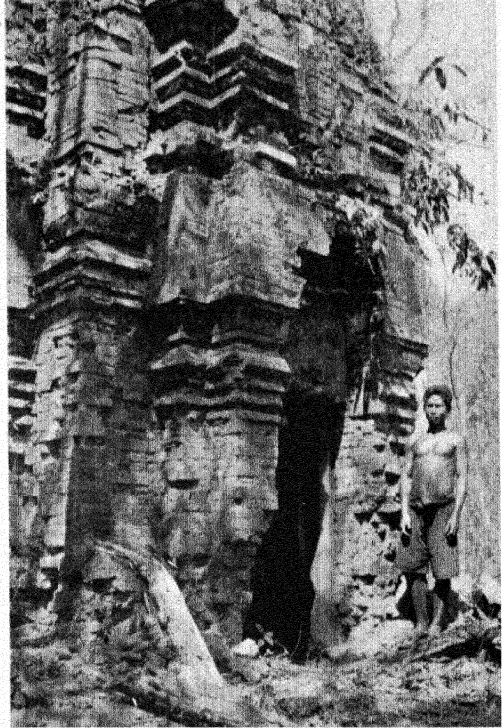


3.—TEMPLE II, FROM THE NORTH-EAST, WITH TEMPLE IIa ON LEFT.

PLATE VI



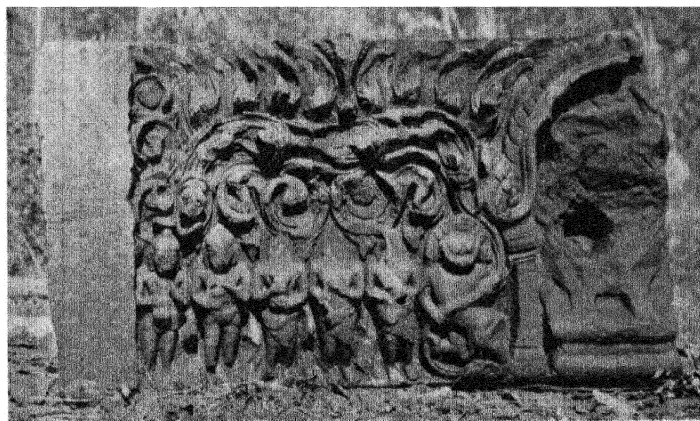
1.—TEMPLE V.



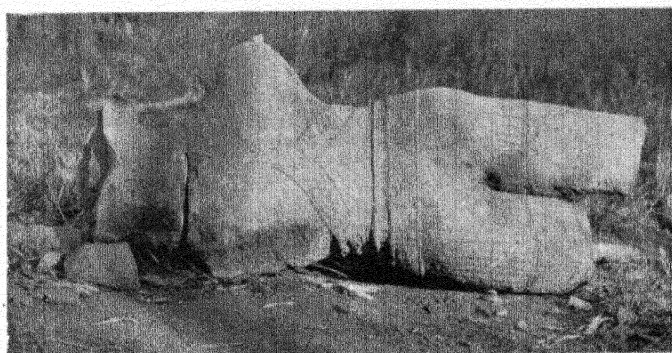
2.—TEMPLE V: PORCH.



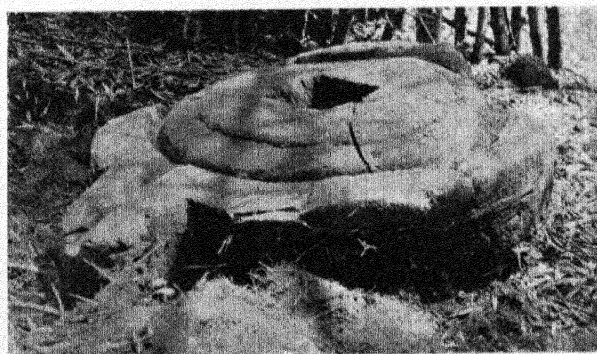
3.—KHMER LINTEL FOUND NEAR BASE OF TEMPLE I.



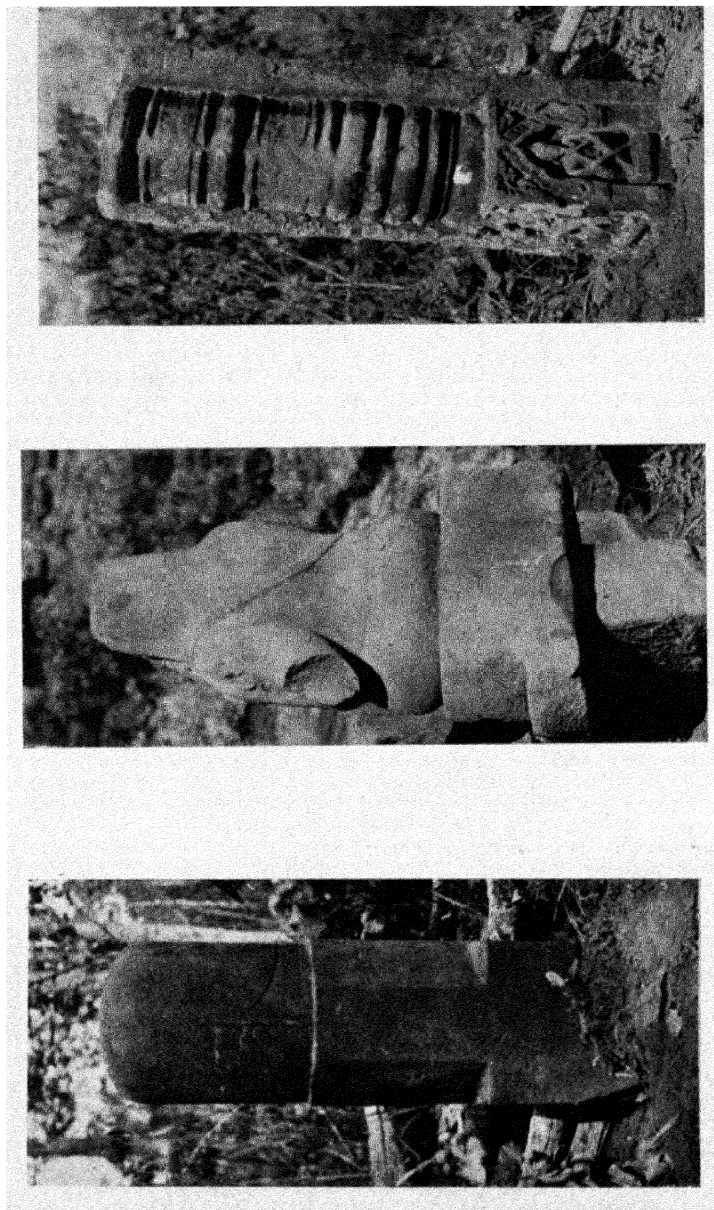
1.—PORTION OF KHMER RELIEF.



2.—KHMER *DVĀRAPĀLA*.



3.—KHMER *SNĀNA-DROṆĪ*.



1.—KHMER LINGA.

2.—KHMER GANEṢA (Ġ).

3.—KHMER PILLAR.



"4. Quelques pays, pour des raisons diverses, n'ont jamais opéré cette fixation relative et la construction légère ou mixte s'y est maintenue. Elle ne nous donne pas d'ailleurs le type primitif importé, à cause des réactions et des transformations locales accumulées pendant tant de siècles.

"5. Une forme indienne massive a pu exister dès l'origine dans l'Inde et être également générative en Extrême-Orient."

In elucidation of which latter clause M. Parmentier explains (*loc. cit.*, p. 223) that even if there did exist in the early times of colonization a massive type of brick building in India, the poor colonists would necessarily have transported only the contemporary perishable form.

In my previous article I admitted that this theory no doubt contains elements of truth. I would even go further here and agree that in all probability every one of the factors mentioned by M. Parmentier has played a part in the evolution of Indochinese architecture. The process must have been infinitely complex, and we must certainly give due weight to the influence of parallel forms of wood architecture only transformed into non-perishable materials at a late stage of their development, the reactions to successive waves of colonization, and the obscuring effects of reflux influences. Indeed, I have nothing but admiration for such a well-reasoned and comfortable working hypothesis, and M. Parmentier is himself the first to admit that it is only hypothesis (*loc. cit.*, p. 223), which, in the absence of the required facts, has done so much to allay so many of our archæological troubles in Indochina. But it is the sweeping nature of this hypothesis that I must combat; and when new facts come to light which do not fit in with all these assumptions, there is no alternative but to restrict the application of M. Parmentier's panacea accordingly.

The first new fact is that in 1932 M. Cœdès discovered that, though none of the sculptures and Indochinese buildings enumerated by M. Parmentier are earlier than the middle of the sixth century, yet two stone inscriptions survive from the Fu-nan period which show that, whatever may have been the case with regard to sculpture and durable architecture, epigraphy is not lacking in the fifth century. And the fact that these early inscriptions are engraved on *pièdes-droits*—i.e., component parts of buildings of non-perishable construction—must have occurred to M. Cœdès when he remarks that the conclusion that epigraphy, the making of stone statues and durable buildings were developments unknown before the Khmers reared their power on the ruins of Fu-nan, is "un de ces arguments *a silentio* qui masquent généralement notre ignorance ou l'insuffisance de notre information."<sup>1</sup>

The second new fact which further disturbs this "argument *a silentio*" is the discovery at Śrī Deva of a purely Indian brick building of a period so

<sup>1</sup> *B.E.F.E.O.*, Vol. XXXI., p. 1.

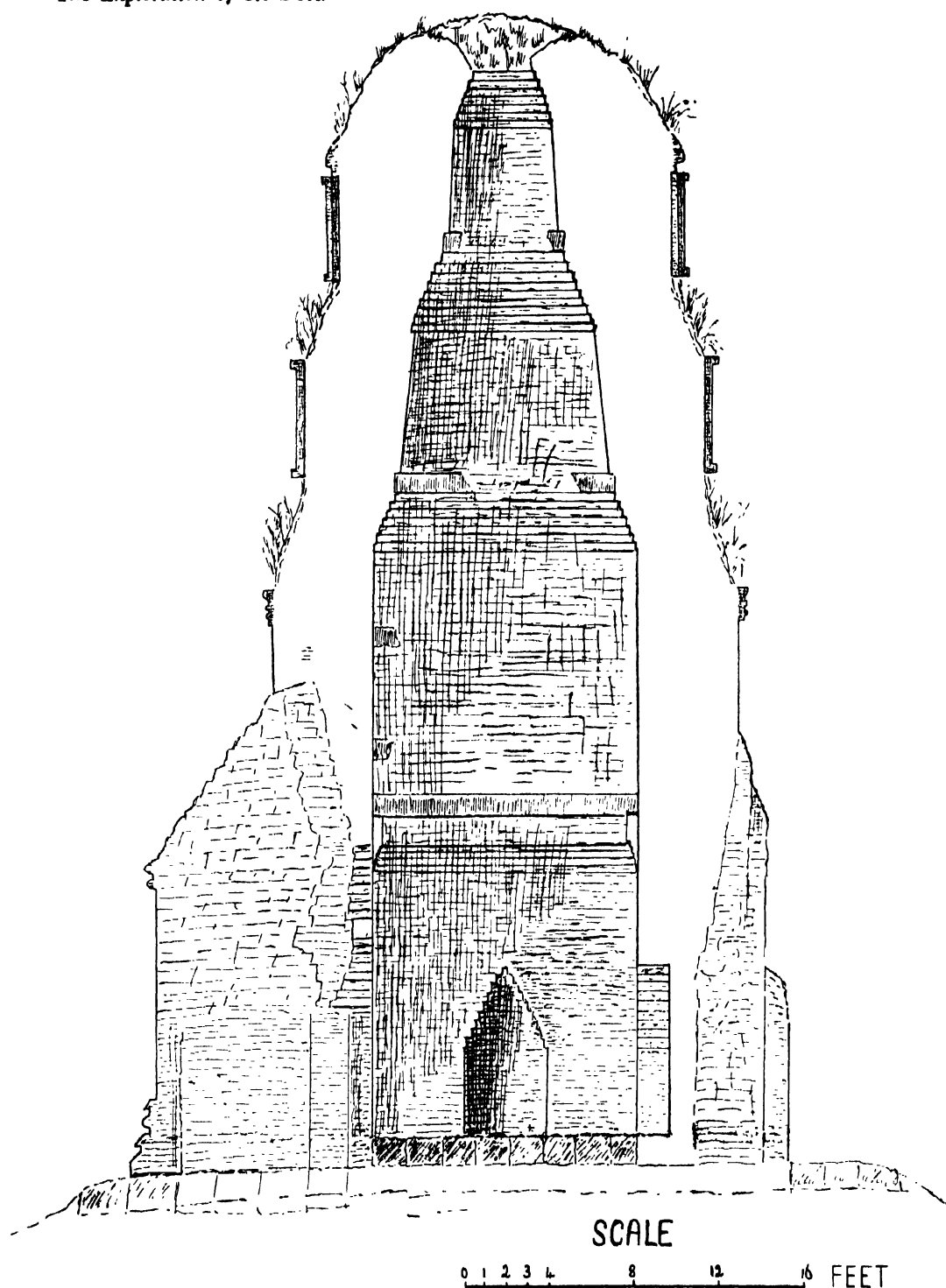


FIG. 4.—TEMPLE I: MEDIAN SECTION (WEST—EAST).

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early and a form so simple that it could well represent the type from which, allowing for the complementary influences referred to above, the various schools of Indochinese architecture could have evolved. It is really irrelevant whether the earliest Indian colonists a few centuries before were building in brick or only in wood as M. Parmentier maintains in his fifth clause. The point is that in the fifth or early sixth century Indian colonists in Indochina, who must still have been in close touch with their mother country, are now proved to have been building unspecialized Indian *brick* temples, making Indian sculptures and writing in a purely Indian script, all of which manifestations are of such a type that they must be placed at the base of Indochinese cultural evolution.

I have now to consider a more recent article by M. Parmentier in which he deals with "L'Art Présumé du Fou-nan."<sup>1</sup> He there advances another hypothesis, which seems scarcely compatible with his earlier views, but which is perhaps prompted by the rather disquieting matter of the inscribed *piéds-droits* mentioned above. In this hypothesis, which I find equally unacceptable, he seeks to establish, amongst other things, that the architecture of Fu-nan is represented today by the buildings previously regarded by him as forming the "simple" type of Primitive Khmer architecture, which is especially characterized by the presence of multiple superior stages each of insignificant height and the absence of both false porches and the corresponding false niches of the upper stages. Now, as everybody agrees, including M. Parmentier in his earlier article,<sup>2</sup> multiple roofs, being further removed from the primitive true storied wooden architecture than are buildings possessing only a few and more definite fictive stages, are a late feature. Moreover, I have suggested above that the absence of false porches, being another development removed from wood architecture, is also a late feature. Again, although none of these buildings is dated, the fact remains that two of them bear inscriptions which are considered on palæographical evidence to belong to the seventh century A.D., and M. Parmentier's attempt to throw doubt on this evidence is not very convincing.<sup>3</sup> And they seem to have been largely associated with Śiva worship, which appears to have had only a minor place in the Fu-nan empire. On the whole, therefore, one might be more inclined to regard this so-called "simple" Primitive Khmer architecture as an unsuccessful and rather decadent offshoot of the main stream of evolution. And the buildings enumerated by M. Parmentier in this article, as intermediate between the "simple" and rich forms, are rather evidence as to the way in which this "simple" offshoot was evolved than *vice versa*, as apparently main-

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. XXXII., fasc. 1, pp. 183-189.

<sup>2</sup> *Études Asiatiques*, Vol. II., p. 231.

<sup>3</sup> *B.E.F.E.O.*, Vol. XXXII., fasc. 1, p. 186, footnote.

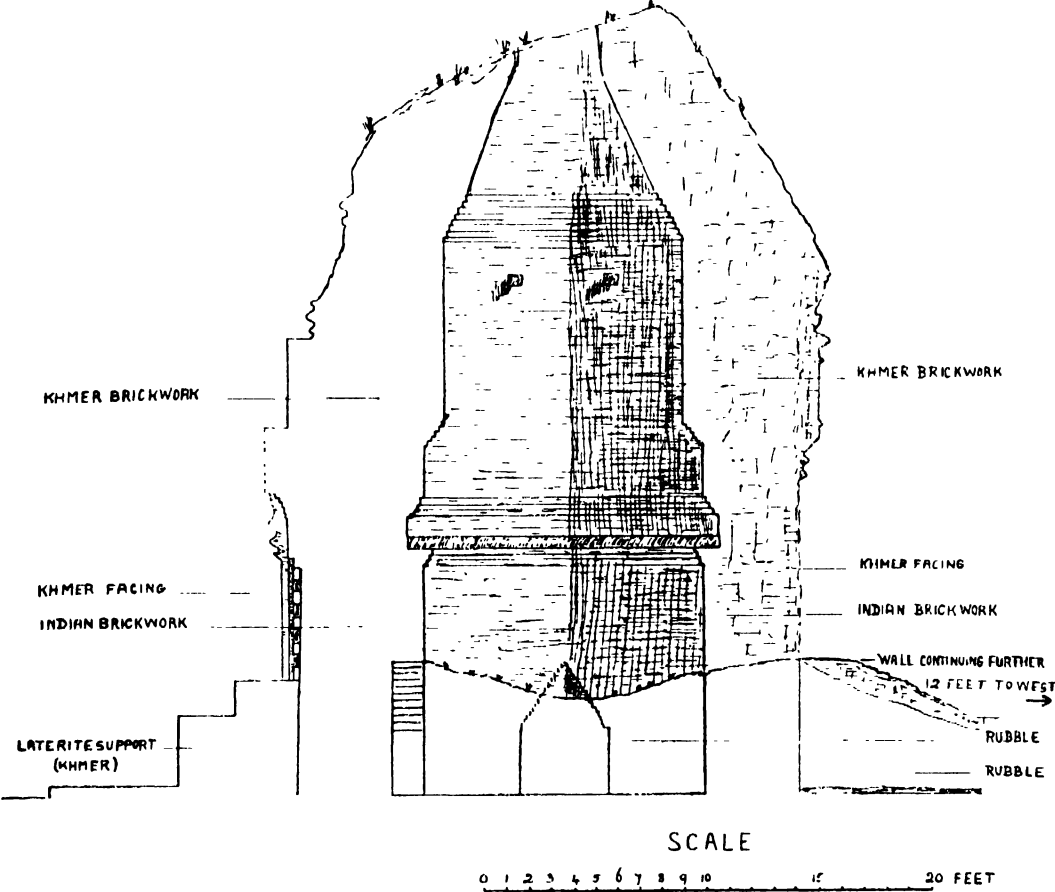


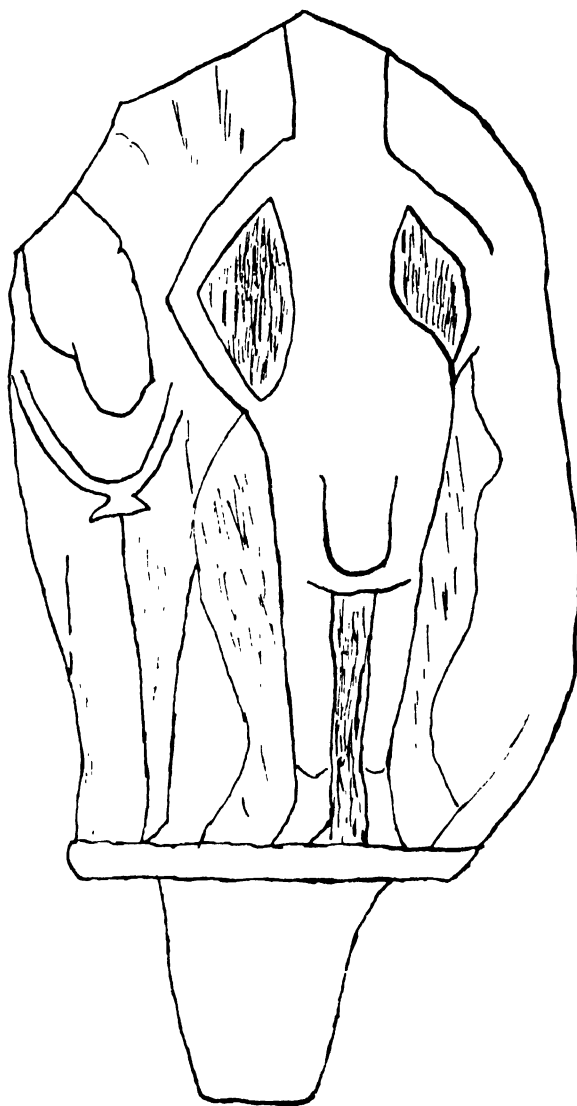
FIG. 5 —TEMPLE II: DIAGRAMMATIC MEDIAN SECTION (EAST—WEST).

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tained by him. As a matter of fact, one is rather surprised to note that M. Parmentier does not suggest, as he does with the Bodhgaya *sikhara*,<sup>1</sup> that this "simple" type of Primitive Khmer building had already gone through in wood forms the process of multiplication of fictitious stages before being translated into brick about the sixth century, whereas the rich type of Primitive Khmer temple, like the South Indian *vimāna*, had been translated into brick perhaps at a later date, but before the process of multiplication was far advanced. In thus taking refuge under cover of his all-embracing theory he would at least have rendered himself invulnerable by retiring into the hazy and hypothetical age of wood architecture which has necessarily left no traces and where, from the absence of all definite scientific data on which to base a discussion, I should have refrained from following him. But by maintaining, as he does, that the rich form has evolved from the "simple" one, leaving aside the question of false porches, M. Parmentier not only contradicts his own statement, referred to above, concerning the comparative lateness of roof multiplication, but goes against all accepted opinions on structural reduplication. The point is, then, that whatever be the origin of the so-called "simple" form of Primitive Khmer architecture, it can by no means itself have originated the rich type. Where, then, must we look for the origin of the rich type of Primitive Khmer building? Must we look for it in some hypothetical form of wood architecture of which no trace remains? No! The discovery of Śrī Deva Temple I makes it quite plain that here we have the ancestral form which, as the result of evolution and the effect of later Pallava influences, produced the rich type of Primitive Khmer architecture, and that it alone is the one certain example that remains to witness to the nature of the ancient architecture of Fu-nan.

These theoretical considerations have led me rather far from my account of the finds at Śrī Deva, to which I must now return, and in concluding this section I would draw attention to Fig. 5, which explains more clearly than could any verbal description the state of the remains of Temple II, and the manner in which the base of the original Indian temple has been utilized by the Khmers in the construction of a temple of their own. This Indian temple, standing at the centre of the city, though of exactly the same type as Temple I, was no doubt constructed a little while before it, and, while it is raised on a low earthen platform measuring 305 feet by 132 feet with its long axis running east to west, it was not built on a tall laterite basement, a fact which may well have been responsible for its early ruin. The lower part of the sanctuary is filled with rubble, but we did not feel able to clear this out owing to the precarious condition of the Khmer superstructure. If it were

<sup>1</sup> *Études Asiatiques*, Vol. II., p. 237.



**FIG. 6.—INDIAN IMAGE NO. 8.**

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permissible to remove this—and its preservation does not seem worth while—or if, as will probably happen during the next few years, it falls down, interesting excavations could be carried out at the base of the Indian temple which might bring to light new finds or which would, at any rate, afford further information as to the construction of the Indian building.

#### IV. THE INDIAN SCULPTURES

The general characteristics of the type of Indian sculpture found at Śrī Deva have already been set forth in the introductory section, in accordance with M. Cœdès' study of the subject. It will, therefore, only be necessary for me to give here a concise account of the four Indian sculptures that we were able to add to the series already known from Śrī Deva, and which will no doubt in due course find a permanent sanctuary in the Bangkok National Museum. They are as follows :

No. 7 (Plate IV, 1).—Torso of four-armed male figure, probably Viṣṇu ; schist ; height of main fragment 2 feet 8 inches. Fragments of the lower limbs, and the feet attached to a pedestal, were also extant, all these parts being found lying inside the porch of Temple I, though they may have been placed there at a comparatively recent date. Probably the officials, when collecting the sculptures that they afterwards sent to the Bangkok Museum some years ago, had passed over this piece because of its lack of a head. I am glad, therefore, to have been able to call attention to this magnificent statue, which, despite its mutilated condition, possesses with its graceful curves and subtle modelling an artistic merit worthy of placing it in the first rank of sculptures from Śrī Deva, if not from the whole of Indochina.

No. 8 (Fig. 6).—Relief depicting a male figure and a horse ; limestone ; height 2 feet 9 inches, including base ; found a few yards to the west of the laterite base of Temple I. This relief is so weathered that my photographs were not very satisfactory, and I reproduce here only a drawing made in the field. In the male figure there is a decided *hanchement* of the left hip, and the position of the arms is an early feature.

No. 9 (Plate IV, 2).—Fragmentary male statue, apparently four-armed and hence probably representing Viṣṇu ; sandstone ; height 1 foot 8 inches ; found leaning against a tree *inside* the subsidiary city, about 450 feet from the rampart towards its north-eastern corner. It was venerated by the peasants, who had stuck together the fragments with mud in a decidedly unprofessional attempt at restoration. If the image is properly restored it will more readily be recognized as a fine example of this school of Indian sculpture, at least when seen from the back, as unfortunately the face is so weathered that the features are indistinguishable. The dress is, as usual, only faintly indicated,

## *The Exploration of Śrī Deva*

and the arrangement of the hair in two rows of overlapping curls strongly resembles that of No. 5.

No. 10 (Plate III, 1, 2, showing head and shoulders only).—Upper portion of a male statue of which only the head remains in good preservation, the arms and the greater part of the surface of the body having been broken off, the curve of the body being recognizable on the left side only. The median portion of what may have been a semicircular nimbus remains behind the head. Green sandstone; height 4 feet 2 inches; found lying on the ground about  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles outside the western gate of the main city. It is a curious fact that in this statue the usual state in which one so often finds ancient images is reversed, and instead of a headless torso we have a figure in which the head is the only well-preserved part. In spite of an obscuring growth of lichens, which can no doubt be removed, we clearly have here a head of great nobility. In addition to possessing the remains of what may have been a nimbus, the decoration of the headdress, the large round earrings (one only preserved), and the facial characteristics, are all features in which it closely resembles No. 6 (Plate III, 3).

The identification of the various kinds of stone of which these images are made is not to be taken as definite, but is offered only as the impression I obtained from the necessarily unreliable examination of the weathered surface of the sculptures. But I am sure that the stone was obtained locally from the hills on either side of the valley, and in crossing the P'ēč'ābun hills I noticed an abundance of sandstone and schist.

I may add that Dr. Stella Kramrisch, in recently examining the photographs of both the Indian sculptures found by me and those previously brought from Śrī Deva, expressed the opinion that they strongly resemble the style of the sculptures of the Śiva temple at Bhumara, India, of the fifth to sixth century A.D.<sup>1</sup> Śiva is, however, certainly not represented amongst the male figures from Śrī Deva, most of which probably represent Viṣṇu, a belief which is strengthened by the finding of the Vaiṣṇava inscription now about to be considered.

## V. HISTORY OF THE INDIAN PERIOD

The stone bearing the inscription just mentioned was found by me lying half buried in the ground on the earth platform of Temple II, 60 feet to the west of the tower itself. The stone was of schist with a total height of 3 feet  $6\frac{1}{2}$  inches, including the pedestal, the upper or bulbous part measuring 1 foot  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches across at its greatest breadth (Plate IV, 3-6). The middle of this bulbous portion had originally borne two lines of Sanskrit running all round

<sup>1</sup> See *A.S.I. Memoirs*, No. 16, 1924.



it, but it had been rendered fragmentary by most of the surface stone having flaked off that portion of the pillar that was above ground. The other inscribed stone from Śrī Deva, which I have mentioned in the Introduction and which has been described as "nail-headed," before it was broken was probably very similar in shape to the one I found. I was unable to trace the original location of this first stone, but the fact that we found two very similar but unfinished and uninscribed stones, one entire and one broken, lying in Gateways 3 and 2 respectively, suggests the possibility that it might have been the intention to set up an inscription at each of the main gates of the city. However, the fact remains that the only one of the two actually inscribed stones of which the exact provenance is known was found near the centre of the city.

This inscription is certainly the most informative document known from Śrī Deva, for though it is so short it gives more definite information than does the one previously known. Dr. L. D. Barnett and Mr. J. Allan of the British Museum have kindly examined my photographs and estampages of the inscription, and Dr. Barnett writes as follows: "It seems very likely that the inscription is of the early sixth century: and I think the characters point to the northern parts of the Deccan, rather than the southern, as the home country. I suspect that the colonists came from Telingana; but I may be wrong. In the first line can be read the words *vaiṣṇavaś śūra . . . satya-sandhi . . .* 'Vaiṣṇava hero . . . true to compact . . .', or perhaps indicating some connection with the Śūra dynasty of Bengal.<sup>1</sup> In the second line we can read the names Rāma and Lakṣmana; but the context is hard to make out, so we cannot say certainly whether these are names of the royal family or of deities worshipped."

Dr. Barnett has also examined a photograph of the other inscription; and he tells me that he would date it from the same period as the one found by me. Other authorities, as has been mentioned in the Introduction, consider the fifth century as a possibility for the previously found inscription, and this would presumably apply to both, but the nature of palæographical evidence is not such that one can insist on too definite a distinction between the writing of the latter part of the fifth and the early part of the sixth century. On other considerations, however, it is certain that these records cannot date from later than the middle of the sixth century, when the Fu-nan empire fell to pieces; while the geographical position of Śrī Deva in relation to the heart of the empire is so remote that it is not likely that the city was founded before the Fu-nan period was well advanced—say the first half of the fifth century. I have already had occasion to mention the fact that two other

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Barnett's first reading is perhaps the more likely, since in the other inscription we find the comparable text *śurau satyadayānvitau*, according to Chhabra (*loc. cit.*).

## The Exploration of Śrī Deva

inscriptions of the Fu-nan period have been brought to light.<sup>1</sup> The earlier one of the two was set up by Gunavarman in the second half of the fifth century, according to M. Cœdès, an ascription with which Dr. Barnett tells me that he is in agreement, while the second is considered to date from a little before the middle of the sixth century, in the reign of a king named Rudravarman. It is interesting to note that the inscription of Gunavarman (who incidentally describes himself as a descendant of Kaundinya), like the inscription found by me at Śrī Deva, is definitely Vaiṣṇava, while Rudravarman's inscription is Buddhist. Moreover, we know from the Liang Shu that in the reign of Rudravarman's father Jayavarman, who died in 514 A.D., Buddhism flourished in Fu-nan. But if by the beginning of the sixth century Buddhism seems to have largely superseded Hinduism in Fu-nan proper, it is quite certain that the inhabitants of the remote vassal state of Śrī Deva adhered exclusively to Hinduism until the end.

The next important consideration concerns the part of India from which the colonists of Fu-nan originated. We have seen that Dr. Barnett considers that the style of the characters used in the Śrī Deva inscriptions points to the colonists having come from the northern part of the Deccan—i.e., Telangana or Vengi, the district situated just north of the Kistna river. The script used in these and other early inscriptions of Greater India is not in Dr. Barnett's opinion Pallava-Grantha, and he tells me that he considers that it is mainly, though perhaps not exclusively, from Vengi that the early Indian colonists set out, though later—that is to say about the seventh century, when the Pallavas reached the height of their power—the tide of colonization flowed more strongly from further south and Śaivism was the predominant religion. Turning now to the evidence supplied by the art of Fu-nan, we have seen that Dr. Kramrisch compares the Indian temple and sculptures at Śrī Deva with the remains found at certain sites in North India; and in this connection the recent opinions of Dr. L. Bachhofer are of interest.<sup>2</sup> He shows that the Buddhist images found in Fu-nan not only exhibit the influence of the Amarāvati style, but that Vengi also itself received and passed on to Fu-nan the art influences of western India, while the characteristics of some of these Buddhist images make it appear that the art of North India also to some extent played its part in forming that of Fu-nan. It seems, therefore, that in the past there has been too great a tendency to ascribe Indian colonization mainly to South India under the Pallavas—for example, in Dr. Chhabra's *Expansion of Indo-Aryan Culture during Pallava Rule*.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *B.E.F.E.O.*, Vol. XXXI., pp. 1-12, with plates, edited by G. Cœdès.

<sup>2</sup> "The Influx of Indian Sculpture into Fu-nan," *J.G.I.S.*, Vol. II., No. 2, July, 1935, pp.

122-127.

<sup>3</sup> *J.A.S.B.*, Letters, Vol. I., 1935.

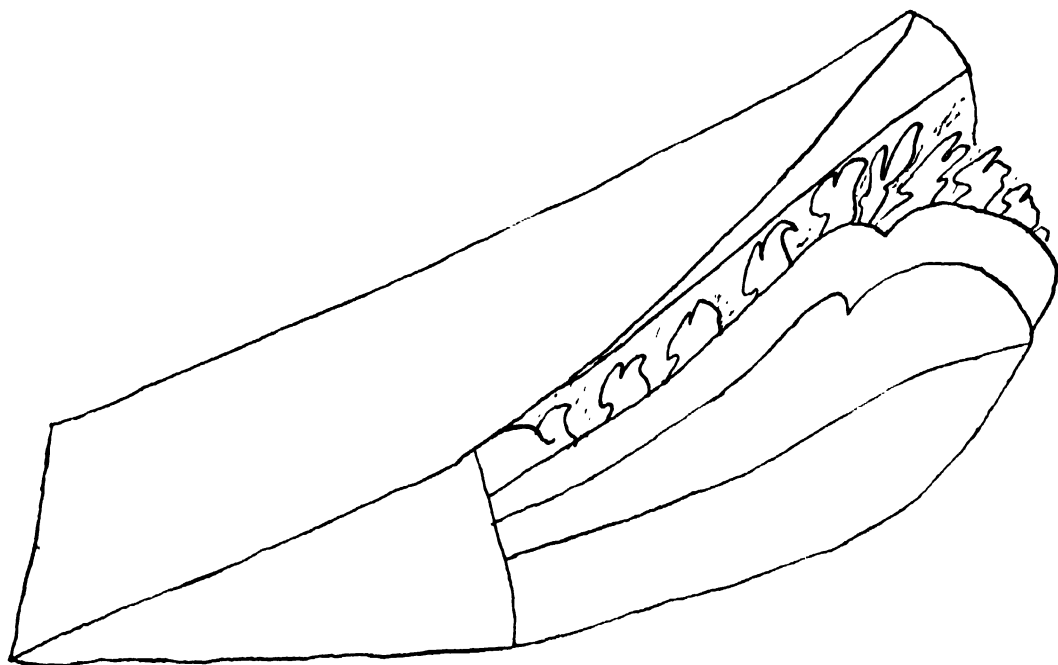


FIG. 7.—KHMER *pièce d'accent* (?).

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## ***The Exploration of Sri Deva***

Later colonists in the seventh century, who were Śiva worshippers, certainly did come from the south, but it seems as though we must look further north for the original home of the earlier colonists, who were mainly Vaiṣṇavas and Buddhists.

In leaving no stone unturned that may possibly throw further light on the history of Śrī Deva, I now propose to leave for the moment the solid ground of inscriptions, and take a short flight into the realm of legend, for it so happens that the local villagers are in possession of a legend, and one only, which they say has been handed down among them from early times, and which purports to tell us of the downfall of the city. I shall repeat it here as I took it down direct from the mouths of the peasants themselves: "On a mountain near the city there lived in neighbouring hermitages two hermits, named Fire Eye and Ox Eye respectively. Fire Eye had for a pupil the king's son, who used to come and study the *śāstras* with him. One day Fire Eye told the prince about two nearby wells. If you bathed in the water of one you died, but water poured on you from the other well would restore you to life. The prince would not believe him, so Fire Eye agreed to make the experiment, first making the boy promise to bring him back to life with water from the second well. But when the hermit was dead, the faithless pupil ran away back to the city. Now the two hermits were accustomed to visit one another at frequent intervals, and it so happened that Ox Eye, not having received an expected visit from Fire Eye, went to look for him. On the way he passed the Well of Death and, noticing that the water was boiling, he realized what had happened. Accordingly he straightway restored the dead hermit to life with water from the Well of Life. Fire Eye, having recovered, would not listen to Ox Eye's counsels of moderation, but swore a terrible vengeance on the prince and the whole city. He made an image of a bull and miraculously gave it life, at the same time filling its body with a potent poison. He sent the bull to circumambulate the city, which it did for seven days, roaring all the while. When the officials had noticed this apparition they had at once closed the gates. But on the seventh day the king ordered the gates to be opened and the bull rushed in. Its body burst open and the poison flowed out, destroying all the people."

It is quite possible that this legend contains a germ of historical truth, for it may be a poetic reference to the ravages of a cholera epidemic, a type of catastrophe that has destroyed many a city in this part of the world. There is, of course, no certainty that the legend applies to the destruction of the Indian city rather than to that of the city after it had been reoccupied by the Khmers; but it is because the story appears to be so very Indian in character that I provisionally include it in this section. Possibly some scholar may be

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able to throw further light on the matter by identifying the origin of the legend in some literary source.

We need not, however, place too much reliance on any possible germ of truth contained in this legend, for an inspection of a map of Indochina can leave us in little doubt as to the historical factors which led both to the founding and to the abandonment of Śrī Deva. By whichever route the early colonists came, whether by the Straits of Malacca or by the route across the Malay Peninsula, they formed their first settlements in the lower part of the Mekong valley, where the capitals of Fu-nan, at Bàsāk or Saṃbór du Fleuve and Añkor Bórĕi (Vyadhapura) are known to have been situated. But in course of time, as we know from Chinese sources, the empire extended its power westwards, perhaps as far as Burma. The route of expansion followed the Nām Mu'n river, and the descent into the Pasāk valley was made by a pass just opposite Śrī Deva. This city was therefore on a great military and trade route, and traders from the fertile lands of the Mēnām valley must have brought their goods by the route we followed to exchange them at the emporium which, as we have seen, adjoined the main city. The remoteness of its geographical position with regard to Fu-nan proper, and its situation on an imperial route, explains why, as indicated by the archaeological evidence, the city was probably not founded until about the first half of the fifth century—that is to say at a period when the empire was about to reach the height of its power and its greatest territorial extent. No doubt the city, with its surrounding land, was held as a fief by some vassal prince, possibly a scion of the Fu-nan royal family, and ruled by him after the manner of the times as an almost independent state. The Chinese records mention a number of such feudal states, owing allegiance to Fu-nan, but, though I have carefully examined the evidence, I have been unable to identify the particulars they give of any of these states as being in any way applicable to Śrī Deva. I can only conclude that a state so far inland as Śrī Deva was not known to the Chinese. With regard to the fall of the Indian city of Śrī Deva, it is quite easy to see that the break-up of the Fu-nan empire, which we know took place about 550 A.D., as the result of the rise of Chenla, the Pre-Khmer state in the south, coupled probably with the declaration of independence by the kingdom of Dvāravatī in the west, would have caused the trade route and the city to be abandoned. The only means of support of the latter must have been this overland trade route, since it is doubtful whether the inhabitants could have grown enough rice for their support in such a narrow valley, and the Pasāk river afforded but a poor outlet to the Mēnām delta and the sea. Thus it was that for the five or six hundred years prior to the coming of the Khmers the city was reclaimed by the jungle. But before turning to this late

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period of revival, at the risk of introducing rather an extensive digression, I intend to take this opportunity to attempt to clarify in some measure the position at which Greater Indian studies have now arrived in regard to the understanding of Indian cultural expansion, at the same time modifying or further developing in the light of my subsequent researches one or two of the ideas tentatively adumbrated by me last year, while at the same time indicating the basic importance of Śrī Deva.

In the first place, when speaking of Indian cultural expansion, it seems to me that it is necessary to guard against the use of the term "period" in the usually accepted sense, because it suggests those watertight compartments that seldom exist in nature. And though some scholars<sup>1</sup> have in my opinion correctly appreciated the number of Indian cultural elements or factors that have gone to the making of Indochinese and Indonesian art, yet I think that we shall be in a better position to understand the manner in which the process of expansion really worked if, when sifting the archæological evidence that has now been accumulated, we try to determine the various successive *waves* of Indian colonization. In determining these waves, however, it is necessary to bear in mind that the process of expansion was one of great complexity, and we must not forget the modifying influences of minor or local waves; the fact that the process is cumulative in effect; the fact that the main waves tend to continue in a stylized form long after the next wave has reached the shore, especially, of course, in backwaters not reached by that next wave; and lastly the fact that reflux influences, local evolution, and the awakening of a local genius are all factors which tend to obscure the recognition of the part played in the development of Indochinese and Indonesian art by the various cultural developments of India. But, despite the complexities of the subject and the necessity of avoiding the pitfall of watertight compartments, the use of exact definitions is to some extent necessary for the progress of scientific knowledge and to enable us to take stock of our position. Hence, while emphasizing the above reservations, I propose to define as follows the Four Main Waves of Indian Cultural Expansion.

*First Wave.*—This extended through the second and third centuries A.D., or perhaps began a little earlier, and, with the possible exception of the Vo-Chanh inscription (Champā), all the evidence points to the Indian influence brought by this wave having been exclusively Buddhist of the Hīnayāna school. Apart from this one epigraph, all the objects that have been found are isolated Buddhist images of Amarāvati style. They have been found in Sumatra (Segungtang), Java (South Djember), West Coast of Celebes (Karam river near Sikendeng), Champā (Dong-Duong), Siam (P'ong Tú'k

<sup>1</sup> Especially Devaprasad Ghosh in *J.G.I.S.*, Vol. III, No. 1, January, 1936.

and K'orat) and Cambodia (head from Wāt Romlok). All these sculptures are purely Indian in style and are the work of Indian craftsmen, but, as no actual settlement of this period has yet been found in South-Eastern Asia, it is impossible to say whether these objects were brought from India or were made by Indian colonists overseas. The existence of the Vo-Chanh rock inscription and the evidence of Ptolemy certainly point to there having been actual Indian settlements at this period. And though in some cases (*e.g.*, Siam) these early sculptures were found on the sites of later centres of civilization, whither they were probably brought by the devout of later ages, the widely separated position of the countries whose names are represented on the above list certainly points to the conclusion that from the very outset Indian cultural influences penetrated to the eastern confines of what was to become Greater India. This wave of influence, which brought Indochina and Indonesia its first contact with Indian culture, undoubtedly came by the sea route through the Straits of Malacca.

*Second Wave.*—The first wave seems to have passed quite smoothly into the second, though colonization now established a firmer hold on the countries of the Further East, and Gupta art characteristics succeeded those of Amarāvati. Moreover, Vaiṣṇavism takes its place side by side with Hīnayāna Buddhism and Śaivism makes its definite appearance, though in a minor degree. The duration of this wave was from the fourth to the middle of the sixth century, and so far as Buddhism (Hīnayāna) is concerned, the immediate effects of this wave of culture are represented by a few scattered images, amongst which may be mentioned the bronze image from Perak (Pangkalan, Ipoh), the small stone relief found by me in Southern Siam (Wieng Srā), the stone figures of Fu-nan style from Cambodia (Wāt Romlok) and Cochinchina (Son-Tho); while Buddhist inscriptions of *circa* 400 A.D. have been found in Kedah and Province Wellesley (ancient structures possibly of the same age on Kedah Peak) and West Borneo (Batoc Pahat). An Indian monk named Gunavarman visited Java and made many converts to Hīnayānism in the fifth century, and the Chinese records show that in Sumatra also this form of religion was predominant until about the end of the seventh century. In the fifth century, however, Vaiṣṇavism appears in Java (inscriptions of King Purnavarman, near Batavia), and, as we have seen, in Fu-nan it makes its appearance in this century side by side with Hīnayāna Buddhism, Śrī Deva being the only known settlement of this period in Indochina. At the same time, and also apparently side by side with Hīnayāna Buddhism, Śaivism makes its appearance in Borneo (inscribed *yūpa* shafts from East Borneo), and the presence of the latter religion is also definitely indicated in Champā (two Cho-Dinh inscriptions).

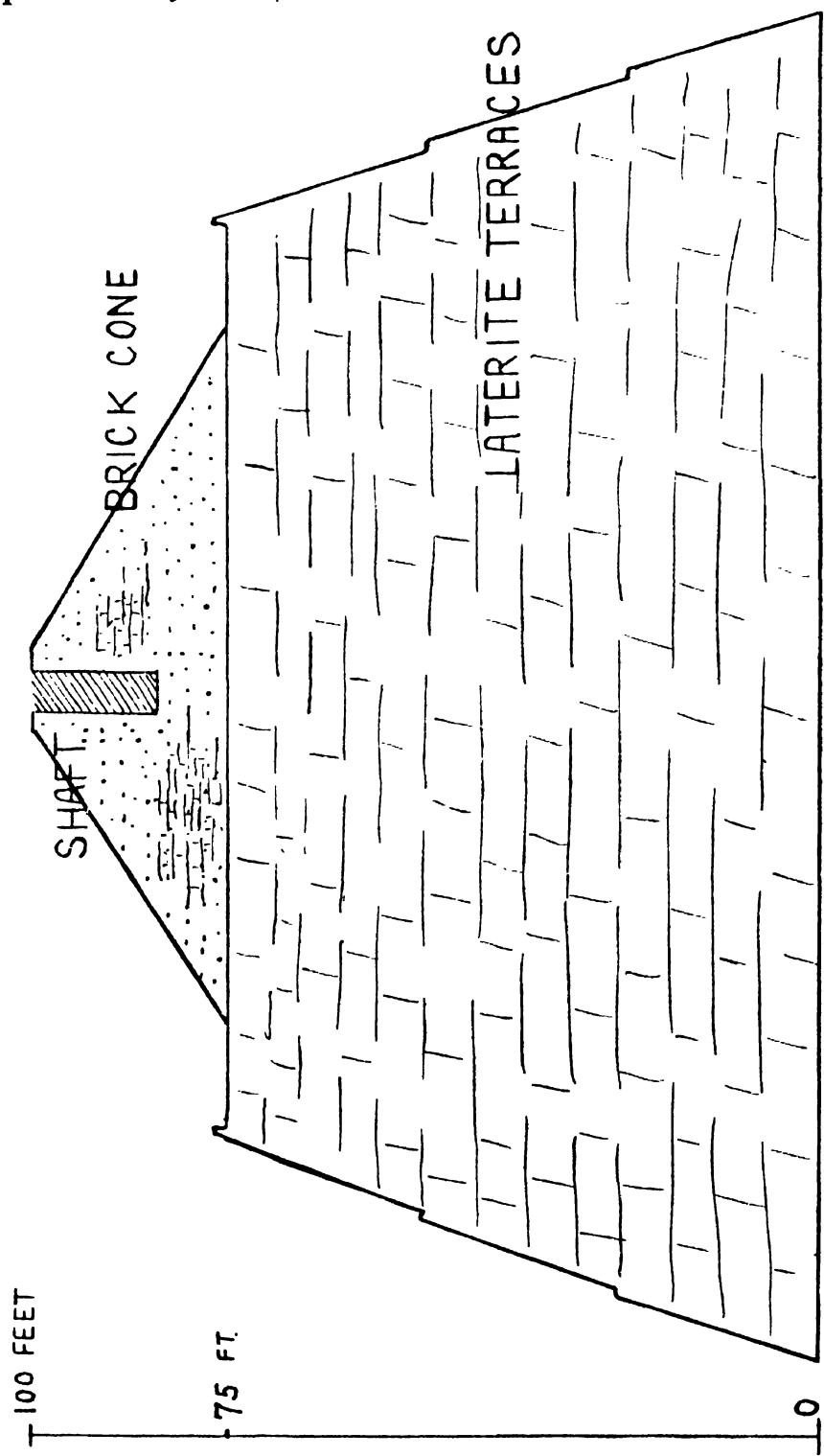


FIG. 8.—DIAGRAMMATIC MEDIAN SECTION OF KHMER TERRACED STRUCTURE OUTSIDE CITY.

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The settlements in Borneo were doomed to early extinction, and were never replaced by later Indian colonists. Indian culture was also doomed to temporary eclipse in Java, since as early as the beginning of the fifth century Fa Hsien tells us that Buddhism was then insignificant there, though Hinduism survived, probably in a debased form, and the efforts of the monk Gunavarman do not appear to have produced lasting results. In Sumatra, however, the testimony of I-Ching shows that Hīnayānism had taken a firm hold. This slackening of Indian intercourse with the more distant Indonesian islands, which in these parts at least temporarily stultified the efforts of the second wave of colonists, was evidently due to the piracy which, as Fa Hsien indicates, had sprung up in the narrow waters of the Straits of Malacca and flourished at the expense of the Indian merchants. But in my view this was the very cause that led up to the opening of the Tākuapa-C'āiya transpeninsular route and the establishment of a centre of cultural development around the Bay of Bandōn, as described by me last year. This route, if we can place any reliance on the Chinese story about Kaṇḍinya, must have begun to function as early as the fourth century, thenceforward becoming progressively of greater importance, until towards the end of the eighth century the Śailendras once more made safe the all-sea route. And we can see that it was owing to the opening of the transpeninsular route that Indian cultural relations continued to be maintained with Fu-nan and Champā, free from the piratical menace of the Straits of Malacca which for several centuries did so much to retard the progress of the southern islands. On this transpeninsular route the only object that can be said with certainty to be the direct product of the second wave is the small Buddha found by me at Wieng Srā (fifth century rather than sixth to seventh, as stated by me in my previous article), but the Viṣṇu from that same site and the one from Tākuapa<sup>1</sup> with the remains of its shrine (of which the bricks are larger than those associated with buildings of the third wave at Tākuapa and elsewhere) are stylized relics of the second wave, the signs of which on this very busy route have necessarily been largely obliterated by later waves.

In the same way the culture of the kingdom of Dvāravātī (objects from Nāk'ōn Pāthōm, Āyūth'ya, Lōp'būri, Ratbūri, Sūp'ān, and P'ēč'ābūri, probably with influence stretching as far south as C'āiya and Nāk'ōn Śri Th'ammārat) is to be considered as a stylized form of the second wave, which in this case seems largely to have penetrated via Burma and the Three Pagodas Pass.

<sup>1</sup> I now appreciate that this image, on account of its being so stylized, must have been made in the Peninsula and not transported from India, as formerly suggested by me (INDIAN ART AND LETTERS, Vol. IX., No. 1, p. 9).

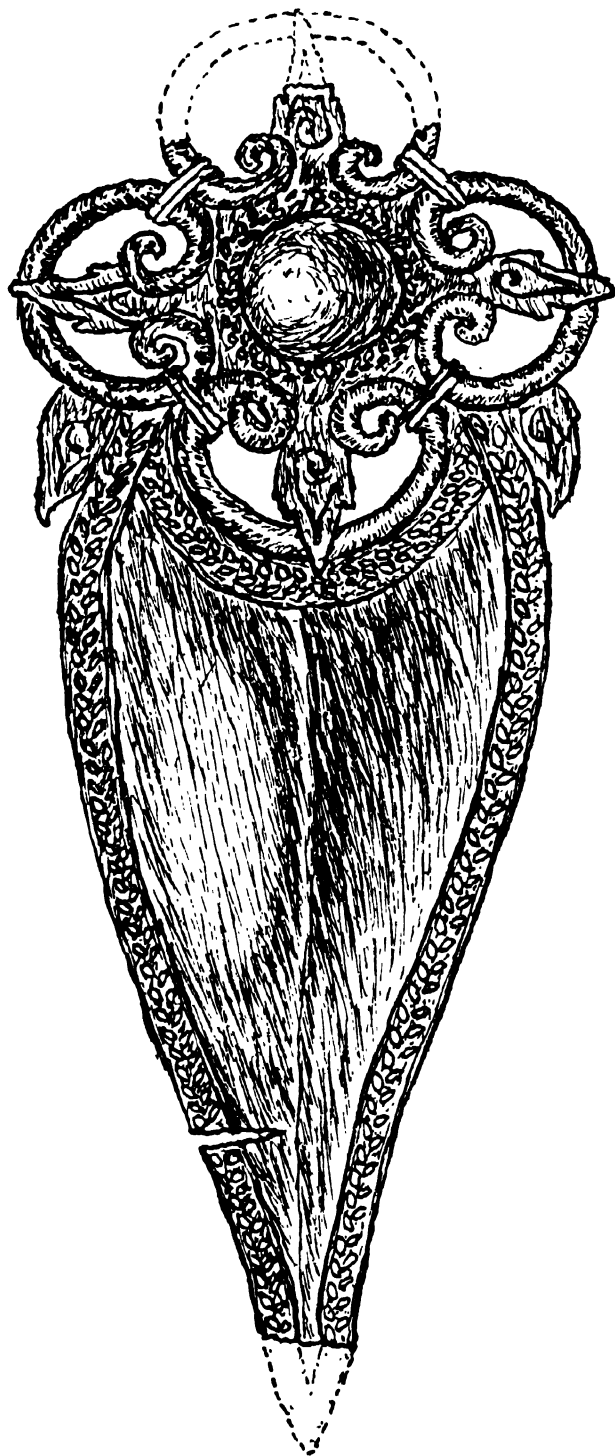


FIG. 9.—BRONZE FRAGMENT, PROBABLY KHMER.

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*Third Wave.*—Its duration was from the middle of the sixth to the middle of the eighth century, corresponding to the dominance of the Pallavas in South India, originating from further south than was the case with the first and second waves, and mainly Śaiva. It followed almost exclusively, I think, the transpeninsular route from Tākuapa to the Bay of Bandōn, where, itself a development of the Gupta era in India, its art superseded the Gupta style in the Malay Peninsula, and has left us there such remains as the Viṣṇu and Śiva of Wieng Srā,<sup>1</sup> the Viṣṇu of C'āiya,<sup>1</sup> and such buildings as Wāt Kēu and Wāt P'rā Th'at at C'āiya (employing smaller and better laid bricks than in structures of earlier type). From the Bay of Bandōn region the influences of this wave radiated out to Cambodia, where, in combination with pre-existing Gupta styles of Fu-nan, the Pre-Khmer or Primitive Khmer art resulted; and to the less effectively Gupta-colonized countries of Java and Champā, producing in the former country the art of the Dieng plateau, and in Champā the definitive style of that country, which was at first predominantly Pallava in style and thenceforward followed a local evolution. For some time this wave hardly touched Central Siam, where the influence of the second wave continued.

*Fourth Wave.*—In the second half of the eighth century (though as early as the seventh in Sumatra), the Mahāyāna seems to have reached the Bay of Bandōn by the same transpeninsular route, bringing Pāla art influences which modified the Indian colonial art produced there by the second and third waves, and resulted in the Śailendra art, of which magnificent examples have been found at C'āiya,<sup>2</sup> while, being in turn radiated outwards to Java, it was responsible there for the ninth-century monumental art of the Śailendra empire. In Cambodia, a little later, the influence of this wave produced the Art of Indravarman, from which was evolved Classical Khmer art. This wave scarcely influenced Champā, but in Classical Khmer times its reverberations spread all over Central Siam and down the peninsula as far as C'āiya.

In concluding this section it may be as well to reiterate the great relative importance of the Indian ruins of Śrī Deva for the cultural history of Greater India, as being the only known surviving settlement of the active period of colonization of the second wave. Whereas the territory of the former state of Fu-nan proper became a scene of vigorous growth and evolution, under the influence of the third and fourth waves, producing in succeeding centuries the Primitive and finally the Classical Khmer culture, in the course of which process the material remains of the Fu-nan empire were ground to powder, so that hardly a statue, much less a building or a city, survives from the active

<sup>1</sup> *Ars Asiatica*, Vol. XII., Plate X.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Plates XII., XIII., and XV.-XVII.

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period of the second wave in Cambodia or in CochinChina, on the other hand the ruins of Śrī Deva lay undisturbed in a secluded valley as almost the only surviving witnesses to the works of the early Indian colonists of Fu-nan.

### VI. THE KHMER REOCCUPATION

The last section completes my study of the Indian ruins at Śrī Deva and their importance for the history of Greater India, and the present section is added more by way of an appendix than with any intention of entering into a detailed discussion of provincial Khmer buildings which do not seem likely to add much that is new to our knowledge of that great art. To deal first with the Khmer *prangs* (Plates V and VI), these are found at four temple sites, as mentioned in the second section, and, though differing in their degree of ornamentation, all belong to the same style, which M. Parmentier has characterized as being a decadent prolongation of the Art of Indravarman, consisting of poor brick temples, which continued to be built up to the last days of the classical period.<sup>1</sup> A temple of this type, though even more decadent than the Śrī Deva *prangs* and probably of Thai construction, is P'ra Prang Khek at Lōp'būri, which is situated not far from the richer stone-built classical type of Khmer temples, Wāt Māhath'at and Prang Sam Yôt, although the latter was probably built by the Thai. These poor brick temples generally have simple octagonal door pillars and plain lintels, but lying near Śrī Deva Temple II we found ringed octagonal pillars with *ṛiṣis* carved at the base, a type of pillar which belongs rather to the stone-built classical *prang*, and is to be seen *in situ* at Prang Sam Yôt, Lōp'būri. We have already seen that in restoring Temple I for their own use the Khmers also utilized such pillars, and it may be concluded that they used such refinements for what they considered to be the principal temples of the city. At Temple I we have also seen that they used a lintel of type III (Plate VI 3) and what I think are stone *pièces d'accent* (Fig. 7). No such structures were found in connection with Temple II, but lying in the subsidiary city near the main road we found portions of a broken pillar with carved *ṛiṣis* at its base (Plate VIII 3), and a broken bas-relief, possibly a lintel (Plate VII 1, showing one portion only), from which the figure in the central niche had been torn out, all of which objects had evidently been at some time transported thither from the main city. The other *prangs* had simple octagonal pillars and plain lintels, which were found *in situ* only in the case of Temple V.

The curious way in which Temple II, of which the western face has completely fallen, has been built up on, and partly encased, the base of the earlier Indian tower has already been indicated in Fig. 5. And it may be added

<sup>1</sup> *Etudes Asiatiques*, Vol. II., p. 204.

here that not only has the base been strengthened by the laterite support built up against the outside of the lower parts of the north, east and south walls, but there also exist the lower parts of brick walls 2 feet 6 inches thick, extending forward from the ruined porch for a distance of 20 feet on either side of an approach 8 feet 4 inches broad, which may have been covered by a brick vault. The entrance, therefore, was at the original Indian floor level, but the false porches on the other faces were necessarily built far above their normal level owing to the presence of the laterite support. Another curious feature of this strangely hybrid building is that its interior construction has evidently been influenced by ideas suggested by the pre-existing Indian tower, because it is closed by *encorbellements successifs*, rather than by a plain pyramidal vault of the type found at any rate in Temple V, where the interior is practically a truncated pyramid measuring 5 feet 6 inches square at the base and about 18 inches square at the open top. Temples III and IV are too completely ruined for me to say anything more definite than that they belong to the same style of architecture in general, and have the same type of pillars and lintels.

With regard to orientation, whereas Temple II follows the plan of the original Indian temple and opens to the west, Temple V opens to the east, and Temple IV and probably Temple III to the south. All these temples were raised on low but extensive earthen platforms. The dimensions of that of the originally Indian Temple II have already been given. That of Temple III measured about 107 by 93 feet, the long axis running north to south, and the temple being situated towards the northern end. The platform of Temple IV measured 129 by 75 feet and was oriented in the same way as that of Temple III, the sanctuary being in the same relative position. In the case of Temple V, the platform measured about 108 by 87 feet, the long axis running east to west and the shrine being situated towards the western end. Adjoining this platform was another of the same extent on which was situated the completely ruined base of another small *prang*, No. V, A. In the same way a small subsidiary *prang*, completely ruined and engulfed by a large tree in a manner reminiscent of many shrines at Angkor, was situated in conjunction with Temple II. But this small *prang*, which may be called II, A, was situated close to the southern side of Temple II, with which it shared the same platform (Plate V, 3). The brickwork of these *prangs* was not so careful as that of the Indian structures, as may be seen in Plate V, 2, where the brickwork of Temple II below the wooden beam is Indian and that above it is Khmer. Examples of the size of the Khmer bricks, which were laid without apparent mortar, are as follows: Temple III,  $10'' \times 6\frac{3}{4}'' \times 2\frac{1}{2}''$ ; Temple V,  $9\frac{1}{2}'' \times 6'' \times 2\frac{1}{2}''$ ;  $10'' \times 7'' \times 2''$ . They were thus definitely smaller than those

## The Exploration of Sri Deva

used by the Indians, but in Temple II there were many large bricks which were probably re-employed Indian ones.

The stone base of an image was found near Temple III, but the only sculpture in the round dating from the Khmer period that was found in the neighbourhood of any of the *prangs* was a statue in green sandstone, measuring 3 feet 6½ inches in height, including its pedestal, which is believed to be a Ganeśa (Plate VIII, 2), though the front of the statue is too badly damaged to make this identification absolutely certain. But that the Khmers were Śaivas is quite definitely established by the finding of *līṅga* fragments of Khmer type, one near Temple II and one outside the subsidiary city. Two broken sandstone *līṅgas* were also found, each on a laterite base near the centre of the subsidiary city, while on another of these laterite bases was found the only complete and perfect *līṅga*, measuring 3 feet in height (Plate VIII, 1). I have already mentioned the fragment of a Khmer Nandi from Sri Deva and the *dvārapāla*, both in the National Museum, and, as previously stated, the fragments of two or three other *dvārapālas* of the same type were found some distance outside Gate 2. One is shown in Plate VII, 2 (length of extant portion 4 feet 6½ inches). We also found a fragment of the arm of a large Khmer statue, possibly a *dvārapāla*, near Temple II.

It now remains to consider the large terraced structures, of which one (locally known as Khău Klang, the central hill) was situated near the centre of the main city. It belongs to the type of artificial mountain, or Kailāsa, of which Bakong and Bayon are examples at Angkor. It is a rough and possibly unfinished structure, regularly oriented, with little trace of terracing, and, while a few worked slabs of sandstone were found on the top and sides of the mound, there was no trace of sculpture in connection with this site. The structure measures about 135 feet square at its base, standing in the middle of a low earth platform about 270 feet square, and it rises to a height of about 50 feet. On the eastern face there are the remains of a stairway which gave access to the flat upper terrace, the southern side of which had apparently collapsed, exposing the regularly laid courses of laterite blocks around what may have been a central cavity. Near the north-west corner of the earthen platform there was an adjoining laterite platform about 30 feet square; and 44 feet south-west of this laterite platform was found a large sandstone *snāna-dronī*, 3 feet 9 inches in diameter (Plate VII, 3).

The other terraced laterite structure (Fig. 8), situated outside the main city and about 1¼ miles north of Gate 5, and apparently approached by the laterite roads leading from Gates 4 and 6, was larger and also more interesting. Like Temple V, it was probably constructed after the buildings in the city, and so has remained in a better state of preservation, showing distinct traces of three laterite terraces. There did not appear to be any earthen platform,

and the base of the structure itself measured about 195 feet square, regularly oriented, the upper terrace being about 75 feet above ground level. Opposite the centre of each face there were the remains of small brick and laterite edifices with worked fragments of sandstone, distant in each case about 75 feet from the main structure. At the centre of each face of the main structure there appeared to have been stairways which gave access to the upper terrace, which was about 135 feet square and was surrounded by a low balustrade of laterite blocks. This brings me to the curious feature of this building, which, so far as I know, is unique in Khmer architecture. On this upper terrace was erected a brick truncated cone, about 25 feet high and having a diameter at its base of about 100 feet. At one or two places on the surface of this cone the brickwork was exposed, indicating from its appearance that the cone was not a mere mound of rubble. On reaching the summit of the truncated cone one stood on the narrow rim of a shaft sunk perpendicularly into the cone. The opening of the shaft measured about 9 feet square, and the depth was about 15 feet. The definite brick courses of the smooth inner walls showed that this shaft was not the excavation of treasure-hunters, but was evidently an original structure. We have seen that the upper part of the laterite mountain in the main city seems originally to have enclosed a central cavity; and it is well known that corresponding buildings in Cambodia had wells sunk into their centres in which were ensconced *lingas* in connection with the cult of the Deva-rāja. I can only suggest that this remarkable pierced brick cone is a local variation of the same idea. As we stood on the rim of the cone we were well above the tops of the surrounding trees, and had a fine view of both the P'ěč'ābun hills to the west and the heights of the K'orat plateau to the east, which gave us an idea of the magnificent setting of the city in the days when the obscuring jungle had temporarily given place to a fertile stretch of padi fields.

Despite the lack of any Khmer inscriptions, the characteristics of the sculpture of this period found at Srī Deva seem to be sufficient to establish that the Khmers must have reoccupied the city about the eleventh to twelfth century, though it must be said that the absence of all trace of Buddhism (Mahāyāna) is remarkable for a city of this period, especially when we consider its prevalence at Lōp'būri. History, we may be fairly certain, repeated itself both in leading to this Khmer reoccupation and in terminating it. For no doubt the Khmers, when they in turn established an empire extending across Central Siam, with the seat of a viceroyalty at Lōp'būri, utilized the ancient route once more, though possibly their main route was the one further south that is now followed by the railway. And with the break-up of their empire they were doubtless obliged in turn to abandon the route and leave the old city once more to the undisputed possession of the jungle.

# THE MUSEUM OF ASIATIC ART, AMSTERDAM<sup>1</sup>

By H. F. E. VISSER

(*Curator of the Museum*)

EIGHTEEN years ago I went to the house of the late Dr. Verburgt of The Hague to see some paintings by a modern Dutch artist. I was not disappointed, for Dr. Verburgt was able to show me some very good specimens, but I was quite surprised to find examples of Far Eastern art in his collection. Although at the time of this visit I had already been active for some years in the field of Asiatic art, I must confess that I was at the time entirely ignorant of the fact that Dr. Verburgt was the owner of Far Eastern objects. A simple deduction on the spot made me realize that there might be other Far Eastern objects in other collections in my country, and that the best way to study and enjoy these would be the organization of an exhibition of Far Eastern art.

Dr. Verburgt told me he welcomed the idea, but asked whether it would not be much nicer and better to found a society of people interested in Chinese and Japanese art, somewhat in the style of the Burlington Fine Arts Club? Once this had been formed, its first task would be the organization of an exhibition of Far Eastern art.

Now, in working out an idea one may arrive at a practical result which differs greatly from what was planned from the outset; in fact, this very often happens. Dr. Verburgt suggested a club of a small number of people interested in Chinese and Japanese art, but in the summer of 1918 the Society of Friends of Asiatic Art was founded with a programme including Far Eastern *as well as Indian art in its widest sense*, and consisted not of a small number of members but of well over two hundred.

Of course, we cannot claim to be the first in Europe to have founded a Society of this kind. I have the great honour and the pleasure to speak here today before members of a Society eight years older than the one I belong to. However, other societies in Europe with similar objects are our juniors: I refer to those in Paris, Berlin, Cologne, Vienna and Munich.

In many points the work of our Dutch Society of Friends of Asiatic Art is similar to that of kindred societies. Our programme, like theirs, includes exhibitions, lectures, excursions, the formation of a library and the publication of periodicals and books. In one respect, however, there is a great difference between ourselves and our sister organizations. None of them had and has the task of founding a museum, since in the towns of their headquarters,

<sup>1</sup> Lecture delivered before the India Society on Friday, May 15, 1936. Mr. John de La Valette, presided.



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London, Paris, Berlin, Cologne and so on, we find the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Louvre, the Musée Guimet, the Musée Cernuschi, the Abteilung für Ostasiatische Kunst, the Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst, etc., partly or entirely devoted to Far Eastern art, to Indian art, or to both. In my country circumstances are quite different. The State Museum of Ethnology in Leiden, now housed in a much better building than previously, possesses a very important collection of Hindu-Javanese plastic art and excellent non-Javanese works of Asiatic art. But Leiden, proud of its University, justly renowned for Oriental studies, is a small town which cannot attract very many visitors to its museums. It therefore would not seem advisable to make Leiden a museum-centre of Asiatic art. Moreover, private persons are not likely to subscribe funds of any importance to its Museum of Ethnology, and it is hardly necessary to mention the fact that nowadays no Government grants large sums for buying purposes to State museums.

Besides in the Museum of Leiden, art from our East-Indian colonies is to be found in the Museum of Ethnology in Rotterdam, in the Museum of Ethnology of the Royal Colonial Institute in Amsterdam, and in smaller museums all over the country. The Municipal Museum in The Hague owns, thanks chiefly to the work of its Curator, Dr. Gallois, a nice and instructive collection of Far Eastern ceramics, the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam has a collection of Chinese ceramics comprising important specimens, and the Museum Boymans in Rotterdam would welcome any enlargement of the small collection of Far Eastern ceramics it has to show at the moment. I should also mention the Museum Princessehof at Leeuwarden, the capital of Friesland. It comprises art from our East-Indian colonies and Far Eastern art, especially Chinese ceramics.

However, all these museums, either because they are not situated in large towns or because only a minor part of their activity can be concentrated on Asiatic art, were and still are not the right places for collecting large series of Indian, Chinese, Japanese and Korean art. An institution like the Society of Friends of Asiatic Art on the other hand, counting among its members nearly all those in Holland who collect, study or love this art, could undertake the foundation of a museum, exclusively devoted to the art of Asia, if it could raise funds to buy works of art and find museum-space to house them.

And here begins my short survey of the history of the Museum of Asiatic Art in Amsterdam. In 1928 the Society of Friends of Asiatic Art could look back upon ten years activity, particularly in the field of the organization of exhibitions, publications, lectures, excursions and the formation of a library. But the most important point of its programme was not fulfilled as yet: the foundation of a museum.

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Opinions differed as to how to start. Should we raise the money first, then buy works of art and in the meantime try to get museum accommodation, or should we only ask for the latter when an extensive collection has been brought together? Fortunately we decided upon the first, which I think was preferable. You cannot begin without funds, but you need not start with a long list of objects. Once good museum-rooms have been secured and, of course, excellent works are available with which to furnish them, important loans and presents come in due time. This fact is proved by the history of our museum.

Towards the end of 1928—that is, before the depression—a committee raised a sum of money for purchasing works of art, which today sounds rather important. A third of the total could be spent at once, whilst the remaining two-thirds was divided into ten annuities.

Let us hope—the end of the annuities being in sight—that better times are at hand and that, when our fund becomes exhausted, benefactors will enable our museum to continue buying in the future.

The Vereeniging Rembrandt—a Dutch society similar to your splendid National Art-Collections Fund—has helped us several times in buying important objects. Its help implies that the museum itself is in a position to pay part of the sum required. For this reason also we shall need money after our own fund becomes exhausted.

So in the spring of 1929 we owned rather a handsome sum to buy works of art, but we had no proper museum-rooms to show the few things we already possessed and to house the works we intended to acquire by purchase, gift or loan. Then a favourable change came about: the City of Amsterdam offered rooms in its Municipal Museum. The offer was accepted with enthusiasm.

And thus, since the beginning of 1932, we are excellently housed in the Amsterdam Municipal Museum. We started with a very large room, which we divided into three smaller ones. Probably towards the end of this year our museum will comprise eight rooms. It will still be a small museum, it is true, but no longer one of the smallest in Europe.

The essential feature of our museum is the combination of Far Eastern and Indian art on an absolutely equal footing and in communicating rooms. This is, however, by no means a unique feature, since the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and some other American museums had already long ago attached the same importance to Chinese and Japanese art as to Indian art. As you know, there is no museum as important in the domain of Asiatic art as the museum in Boston. At the end of 1927 it had a "Department of Chinese and Japanese Art" and a "Section of Indian Art and Muhammadan Art." Since 1928 both are combined and named "Department of Asiatic Art." In the

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Metropolitan Museum of New York, the Curator of the Department of Near Eastern Art is also entrusted with Indian art. Although, *as far as America is concerned*, it is but natural to show Far Eastern and Indian art in *one museum-department*, it is, in Europe, unusual to find both arts exhibited in communicating rooms and on an absolutely equal footing. The Musée Guimet in Paris is in the first place highly important for its collections of Indian art. It also possesses among many Far Eastern objects, more or less interesting from an ethnographic point of view, good Chinese and Japanese works of art. But one cannot say that here Indian and Far Eastern art are shown on an equal footing. In Paris this might be possible if only the Far Eastern works of art in the Louvre, the Chinese in the Musée Cernuschi and the magnificent Indian series in the Musée Guimet were combined in a Museum of Asiatic Art. Since the Louvre and the Musée Guimet are Government museums, such a combination is possible, though probably very difficult to bring about. The Musée Cernuschi, however, is a municipal museum, a fact which makes it nearly impossible to incorporate it in a new museum of Asiatic art in Paris.

The way in which Indian and Far Eastern art are shown in the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum is known, I presume, to everyone in this audience. I am well aware of the fact that many admirers of Asiatic art in this country cherish the idea of combining the works of that art in the possession of both museums in one large museum-department or in one museum. Many people from abroad would welcome such a valuable addition to the many important institutions of London. If in the British Museum and the Indian Section of the Victoria and Albert Museum Indian works of art should no longer be shown grouped according to their religious or ethnographic, but according to their æsthetic, value they would be appreciated as much as good Far Eastern works of art.

In the Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin you will find some excellent Indian works of art combined with plaster casts and objects only interesting for students of ethnography and Asiatic religions. Here, too, it is a pity that they have not been combined with the excellent collection of Far Eastern art.

Next to London, Paris and Berlin, Stockholm ranks first as a centre of Asiatic art in Europe. But it derives its importance as such chiefly from its long series of Chinese works of art.

The Museum of Asiatic Art in Amsterdam, being a small museum in a small country, founded much later than museums or museum-departments of the kind in Europe, cannot be compared for richness of contents with the numerous treasures in the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the State Museums of Berlin, the Musée Guimet and the Louvre. In quality

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it is perhaps not much inferior to the other European public collections. In showing Far Eastern and Indian art alike, it is, however—I hope you will excuse me for stating this—ahead of European institutions of the kind.

I have been talking of Asiatic art as comprising two large domains—Indian and Far Eastern art. I never mentioned Near Eastern art, originating, geographically speaking, also on the Asiatic continent. This needs to be explained. Near Eastern art is something so essentially different from Indian, Chinese and Japanese art that it is a highly difficult task to combine it in a museum with the latter arts. No doubt Persian art has sometimes been influenced by Chinese art and vice-versa, whilst Mughal art is an important chapter in the history of Indian art and Near Eastern influences abound in the art of Central Asia. Still it seems wiser to show Near Eastern art separately or combined with Western art, a system generally adopted in our European museums. There is no reason to follow American methods here, which tend to include Near Eastern art in departments of Asiatic or Oriental art.

The religious, philosophical, ethical and æsthetical backgrounds of the Near East and what I understand by Asia—India in its widest sense and the Far East—diverge so considerably that, in my opinion, no attempt should be made to group them together.

And now, after these introductory remarks, you will want me to explain how the various domains of Asiatic art are represented in our museum. It goes without saying that one category is much better represented than another. There is hardly one museum in the world which cannot show serious gaps.

Let me start with Indian art.

Thanks chiefly to the activity of the President of our Society of Friends of Asiatic Art, Dr. Westendorp, the Archæological Survey in Netherland India gave us some very important and large Hindu-Javanese stone sculptures as permanent loans, whilst we were presented with other similar pieces. Most of the pieces the Survey has sent us are loans: if one of these pieces is needed for the restoration of one of the numerous Hindu-Javanese monuments, it must be sent back to Java. Of the pieces presented to us the provenance is unknown. Among these is a fragment of exceptional beauty.

All these Hindu-Javanese sculptures date from the Middle Hindu-Javanese period—that is to say, from the eighth, ninth and early tenth centuries. The Survey did not send pieces in the Eastern Hindu-Javanese style, which, as you know, dates from a considerably later period. For very important pieces in the latter style you have to go to the State Museum of Ethnology at Leiden. Here you find the magnificent series from Singosari,

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now, thanks to the Vice-President of our Society, Lieut.-Colonel van Erp—who is well known to you—beautifully exhibited in the new building.

No doubt the Leiden Museum ranks first outside Java as regards Eastern Hindu-Javanese stone sculptures. Our museum, on the other hand, must be regarded as ranking first in Middle Hindu-Javanese pieces.

The museum is very poor in Hindu-Javanese bronzes, though it can show two exceptionally fine pieces, a small group (Fig. 4) and an Eastern Javanese lamp (*INDIAN ART AND LETTERS*, New Series, vol. ix., No. 2, Fig. 16, facing p. 94). The last piece, however, is a loan. The Leiden Museum is very rich in Hindu-Javanese bronzes, not all of them of the best quality. No museum in Europe, however, possesses finer Hindu-Javanese bronzes than the Musée Guimet in Paris. It owns three pieces of the very best quality.

So far, the museum did not extend its programme to the more or less barbaric art of Netherland India, such as the art of Timor, the Dayaks, etc. This is not due to any lack of appreciation by us, but because it is difficult to devote in a small museum separate rooms to the ikats, incised and carved bamboo and horn, the objects decorated with beads, etc., made in the islands around Java and Sumatra. Therefore, for the time being, the art of Netherland India is, in our museum, chiefly confined to Hindu-Javanese, early Javanese and early Balinese art. Masks and weapons are included in these groups. Of the latter there is a fine collection.

We are very glad that we can show in addition to our objects from Netherland India other specimens of Indian art. The art of India proper is represented by a small but varied number of sculptures. There are Gandhāra and Mathurā sculptures, Central Indian and South Indian pieces. Many of these are loans from the large collection of Asiatic, chiefly plastic, art belonging to Baron von der Heydt. Among the South Indian pieces the large bronze Dancing Īiva is one of the finest works of Indian plastic art in Europe and America.

Khmer art is represented by a small series of choice pieces, selected in Angkor by Dr. Westendorp. Siamese art is scantily represented, but one of the few pieces we can show is of superior quality. The only Champā piece—kindly lent by Baron von der Heydt—is very fine. Small plastic works from Nepāl, Tibet and Burma give some idea of the art of these border-lands of Indian art.

Far Eastern art is represented by the following categories of Chinese, Japanese and Korean art :

A few Yin-Chou style bronzes, a large Huai style bronze bell and two cases of smaller early Chinese objects in bronze, silver and gold—amongst them some nice mirrors—show the mastership in metal work of the early Chinese.

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Of Chinese sculpture in stone, you will find only a few pieces. The number is hardly worth mentioning, but we possess one fragment from the caves of T'ien-lung Shan which ranks among the best T'ang pieces. Sculpture in wood is somewhat better, tomb-figures, thanks to a loan, rather well represented.

Though the museum possesses some good Chinese paintings, yet all that we can show from this very important domain of Far Eastern art is by no means sufficient. To acquire fine and important Chinese paintings is a matter chiefly of taste, knowledge, patience and . . . money. It is for others to decide whether we comply with the three first conditions, but that the funds of a small museum in a small country are hardly sufficient to buy some Chinese paintings of the first order is self-evident.

The early and later ceramic wares shown in the museum are all loans. There are very many gaps, but on the whole it is rather a handsome collection, which, of course, should not be compared with what one is accustomed to see in London and Paris public and private collections.

Korean art is only represented by ceramics.

It is somewhat difficult to decide whether the Japanese works in the museum, taken as a whole, are more important than the Chinese. No doubt the Japanese paintings are better. There are more of them, and they are of a higher quality on the average. The Kamakura Jizô painting and the Yamato-e screen are very important.

The collection of Japanese lacquer, though rather small, is a feature of our museum. In quality it ranks perhaps after the important collection in Berlin. Some fine Nô masks and a small but excellent loan collection of pottery should be mentioned. Armour, weapons, tsuba, netsuke, etc., are shown in small series, whilst textile art, so far, is only represented by a collection of fragments. We possess a few sculptures; good, but certainly not excellent, specimens. Only, as you know, Japanese plastic art of the first rank is not to be found in Europe with the exception of some Nô masks. Even America cannot show much that can be regarded as masterpieces. Plastic Japanese art of fine quality is even in Japan restricted to temples and museums. Private collections in Japan, so very rich in Japanese art of every description, are rather poor in Japanese plastic art. I say plastic art, because a large part of this art consists of pieces not carved but executed in bronze, dry lacquer or clay. I always feel it is not fitting to speak in such cases of "sculpture."

About the illustrations accompanying this article the following remarks may be of some interest.

The Manjuçrî, reproduced in Fig. 1, once formed part of Tjandî Plaosan, one of the temples of the large Prambanan complex. This probably

9th century Hindu-Javanese temple is in many respects a ruin, in which it is impossible to replace our sculpture. We are extremely grateful for this important loan, no doubt the largest and one of the most important Hindu-Javanese stone sculptures outside Java.

Of the two large Hindu-Javanese Makara in the museum, the one reproduced here (Fig. 5) was given by Lieut.-Colonel van Erp to Tjandi Boebrah, destroyed but for its base. This excellent piece shows the full development of Hindu-Javanese ornamental sculpture combined with figure carving. Composition, rhythm and conception are masterly; the feeling is subtle and at the same time monumental and grand.

The same qualifications apply to the small, delicate bronze group illustrated in Fig. 4. In all probability we have here before us a scene from a legend. It is a pity we do not know what legend. As a Hindu-Javanese bronze, this small work of art is unique as regards style and general feeling. Its plastic is as refined as the psychological touch. The back shows the noble character of this "*pièce unique*" very well.

The Ayuthia period of Siamese art seldom produced a bronze Buddha head as beautiful as the one reproduced in Fig. 2. The type is well known, but it will be difficult to find similar heads better than this. Add to its plastic and linear qualities a light green patina as fine in colour as that of some early Chinese bronzes, and you may well imagine that our museum is very proud of this piece.

Among the Indian works in the museum, the large Dancing Çiva ranks first. A glance at the reproduction of this magnificent piece (Fig. 3) easily makes this clear. It is perhaps permissible to mention this piece directly after the two famous bronzes of the Madras Museum. However, there is hardly a Naṭarāja bronze in European and American collections on a par with this very important work, acquired with the aid of the Rembrandt Society and of Mr. C.-T. Loo. A beautiful patina embellishes the fine modelling and the impressive silhouette. Special attention should be paid to the hands and feet.

A large Chinese bronze bell, similar to the one lent by M. Stoclet to the International Exhibition of Chinese Art in Burlington House, was bought for the museum six years ago with the aid of the Rembrandt Society (Fig. 7). These bells are splendid examples of the fine Huai style in early Chinese art, since a good many Huai ornaments adorn their richly decorated surfaces.

As already stated, the museum possesses a fine fragment of the Chinese rock-caves of T'ien-lung Shan. The Bodhisattva, illustrated in Fig. 8, is one of seven figures that once must have contributed to the beauty of cave No. 14, practically the best cave of the T'ang period of T'ien-lung Shan. All the

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caves have been sadly ruined by iconoclasts of the modern type—those who ruin and rob for the sake of money.

Our Bodhisattva is carved in sandstone of a fine grain ; it shows traces of polychromy in terra-cotta red. Its subtlety of plastic form, well balanced draperies and colour are marvellous to behold.

There are not many Sung paintings in European collections ; the Exhibition in Burlington House has clearly proved this point. Our museum is therefore rather proud of its small monochrome Sung landscape (Fig. 9), certainly not as good as some of the fine album leaves in the Museum of Berlin, and moreover no longer of the original shape (which was probably square), but still no doubt "*de l'époque*," which means much.

The most important work of a series of acquisitions, bought in Japan six years ago, is a sixfold screen in Yamato or Tosa style, of which a fragment is reproduced here (Fig. 10). The companion screen of the pair—Japanese screens are always painted in pairs—has probably been destroyed, which is much to be regretted. If the second screen had been preserved we should certainly not have been able to buy the pair. A pair of screens of this importance, beauty and style would have cost a considerable sum of money. One screen of a pair has not a great value in the Japanese market. With us the Japanese opinion that one screen is not "*comme il faut*" did not weigh, our screen being a splendid composition in itself.

There is a very impressive psychological touch in the scene depicted ; the colour-effect is very unusual, the lines are bold but not merely decorative. The somewhat primitive way in which the patterns are painted on the garments should be noted. According to Professor Dr. Otto Kimmel, the competent connoisseur, our screen is unique in Japanese art.

Among the objects in our museum I particularly like the lacquer inrô of Fig. 6, a characteristic Japanese work of art. Only a Japanese artist could create a design of this kind. Every smallest detail is carried out with great craftsmanship and refined taste. Works like these breathe the very essence of Asiatic art.

### DISCUSSION

THE CHAIRMAN (MR. JOHN DE LA VALETTE) : Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen,—It is a very great pleasure for me to be allowed to introduce to you Mr. Visser, who is an old friend of this Society. I think it is about thirteen years ago since he lectured to us for the first time. Mr. Visser is a modest man, and yesterday when I lunched with him, he was persistent in impressing upon me that he was not a scholar. This, however, detracts neither from the keen interest which he takes in his subject, nor has it prevented him from studying it with care.





FIG. 1.—MANJUÇRĪ, HINDU-JAVANESE, PROBABLY NINTH CENTURY.  
From Tjandi Plaosan; andesite; height 1.40 m.



FIG. 2.—HEAD OF BUDDHA, SIAM, AYUTHIA PERIOD, ABOUT FIFTEENTH CENTURY.  
Bronze ; height 38 cm.



FIG. 3.—NĀṬARĀJA, SOUTH-INDIAN, *CIRCA* FOURTEENTH CENTURY.  
Bronze ; height 1.55 m.



FIG. 4.—GROUP, HINDU-JAVANESE, TENTH CENTURY OR LATER.  
Bronze; height 7.5 cm.

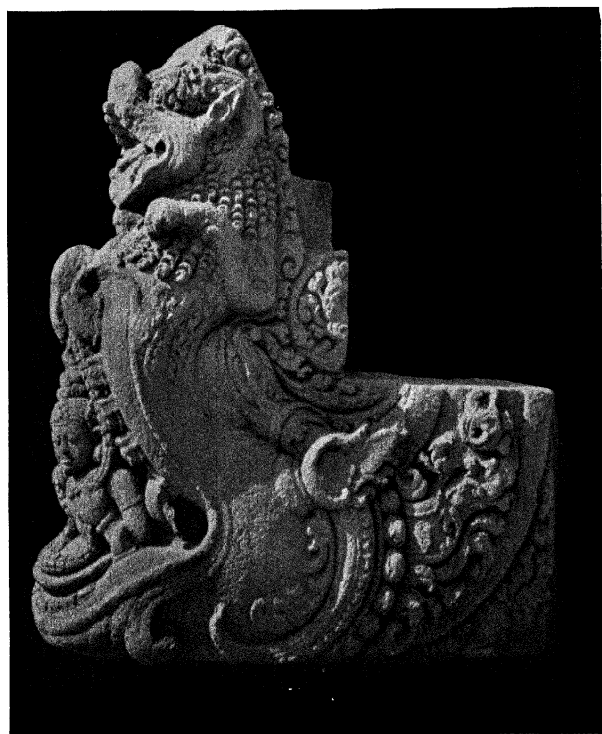


FIG. 5.—MAKARA, HINDU-JAVANESE, PROBABLY NINTH CENTURY.  
From Tjandi Boebral; andesite; height 95 cm.

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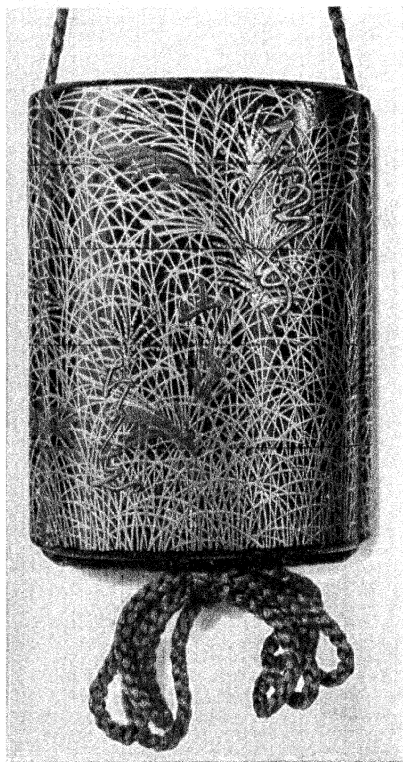


FIG. 6.—INRŌ, JAPAN, EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.  
Lacquer.





FIG. 7.—BELL, CHINA, HUI STYLE (SEVENTH TO THIRD CENTURY B.C.).  
Bronze ; height 59 cm.

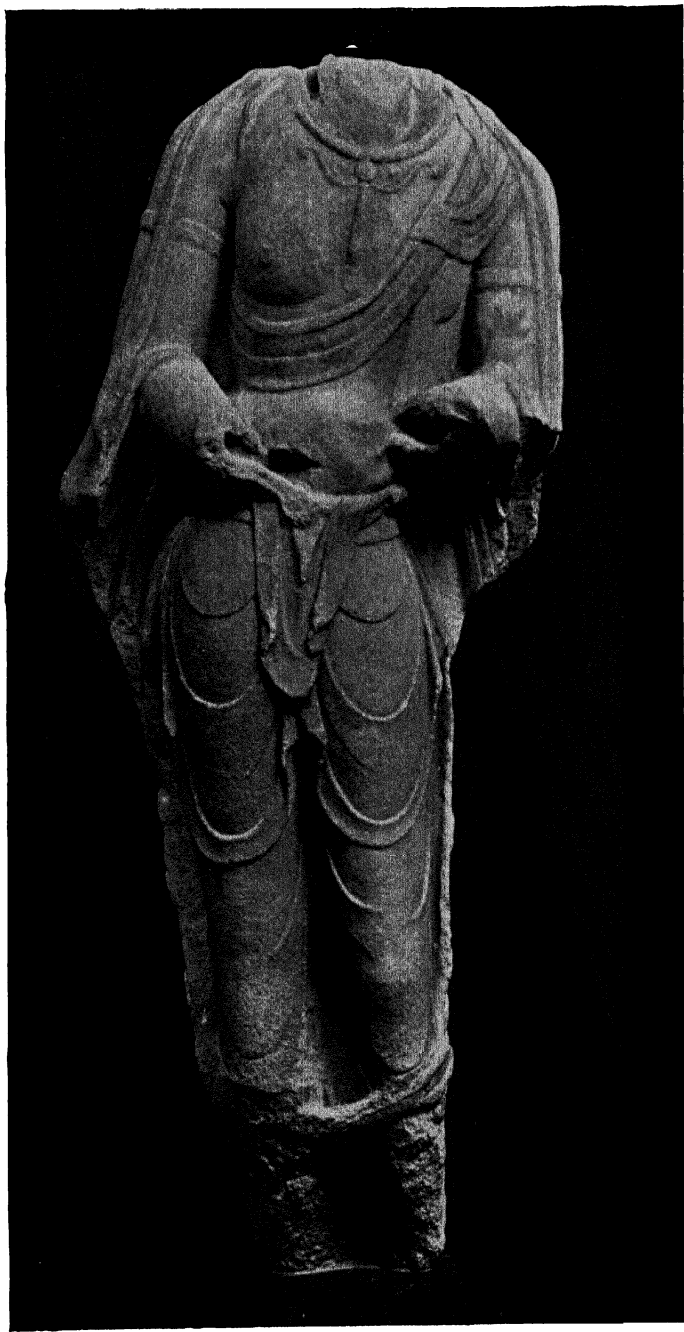


FIG. 8.—BODHISATTVA, CHINA, T'ANG PERIOD, PROBABLY SEVENTH CENTURY.  
From Cave No. 14 of T'ien-lung Shan ; sandstone ; height 95 cm.



FIG. 9.—LANDSCAPE, CHINA, SUNG PERIOD, PROBABLY TWELFTH OR THIRTEENTH CENTURY.  
Ink on silk ; diameter 22 cm.

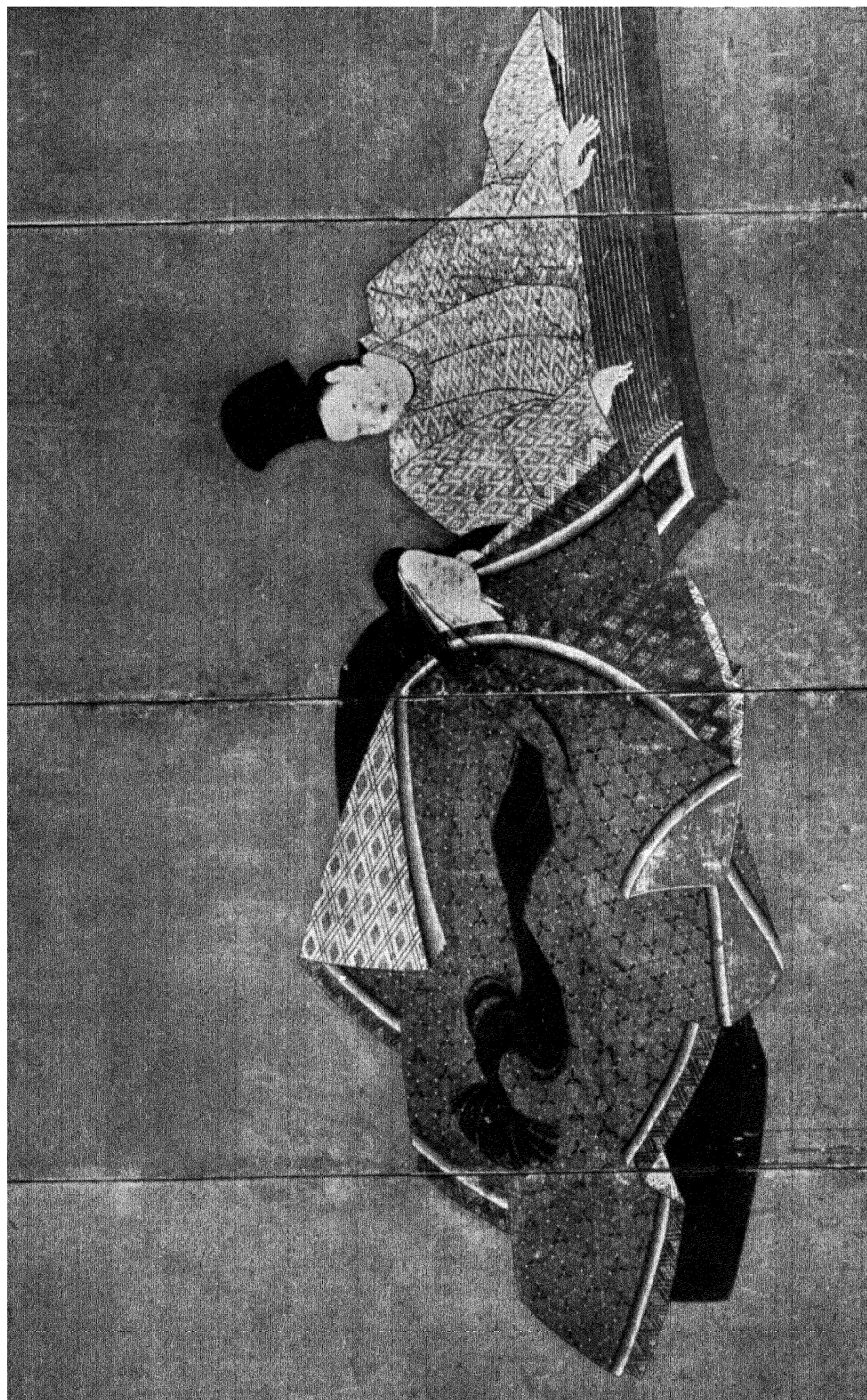


FIG. 10.—FRAGMENT OF A SCREEN (SCENE FROM GENJI MONOGATARI ?), JAPAN, YAMATO STYLE, ABOUT 1600.  
Colours on paper.

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The interest that we in this Society will, I feel sure, take in Mr. Visser is due to the fact that he switched over his whole career, and abandoned the studies he was completing as a mechanical engineer, to go in for art. And he took that serious and important step because of the attraction which Indian art had exercised on him. A couple of years before the War, Mr. Visser was completing his studies at the University of Munich, which, in those days, was a very live centre for art of many kinds, including Asiatic art. From that time on he has pursued his studies in various sections of Eastern art with great perseverance and with that thoroughness which one expects from his countrymen. He has not only visited in that connection all the museums in his own country and many on the Continent, but also thoroughly acquainted himself with what is being done in this city, and he has been to America for the same purpose. In addition, he has travelled extensively through the Dutch East Indies and Indo-China, and also through a great part of India. In all these places he has been in contact with the leading men who are interested in Asiatic art. He is, therefore, eminently qualified to deal with the subject on which he is going to give us a paper this afternoon. There, again, he has been unduly modest by giving it a title which refers only to his own museum, namely, The Museum of Asiatic Art in Amsterdam, whereas, as a matter of fact, he will take us much further afield than that.

I will now call on Mr. Visser to address us.

*(The paper was then read by MR. VISSER.)*

THE CHAIRMAN: I think you will agree I was right in saying the title of Mr. Visser's paper was too modest for its contents.

I wonder whether Sir Atul Chatterjee, who is here, would care to say a few words.

SIR ATUL CHATTERJEE: Mr. Chairman, Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I feel we owe a very great debt of gratitude to His Excellency the Netherlands Minister for his very kind hospitality to the members of the Society, in giving us the opportunity of listening to this most fascinating and entrancing lecture, and also of seeing these beautiful slides.

Those of us who have had the privilege of seeing some of the museums in Holland, and of watching the work that is being done there, both by the Government and the scholars of Holland in conserving the works of art in the Netherlands East Indies, and making public the results of their researches, ought to be most deeply grateful to them for that work. The Government and the people of Holland in this respect set a very good example to other countries who have interests in the East. Those of us who come from the East feel that the more our art, our literature and our drama are studied in the West, the better will be the understanding between the East and the

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West. I feel that lectures like the one we have listened to and the hospitality which has been so generously extended to us by His Excellency the Minister will contribute to that cause.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Speaker this evening has raised a certain number of controversial points, but I am afraid it is too late to enter into many of them. There is one point with which he dealt upon which we would very much like to have had the opinion of such eminent experts as Mr. Arthur Upham Pope and Dr. Phyllis Ackerman. I wonder whether a few words even at this late hour might still be possible with regard to the position of Persian art in relation to other Asiatic arts.

DR. PHYLLIS ACKERMAN: May I, speaking on behalf of Mr. Arthur Upham Pope, express his profound regret that he has not been able to be here to hear Mr. Visser's interesting and significant exposition of the latest development in the problem of presenting the art of Asia as a whole. Mr. Pope has been actively interested in the idea of the Asiatic Museum for fifteen years and looks forward to visiting Holland to see evidence of the actual inauguration in Amsterdam of the programme, while the rest of the world has been only talking and planning. Judging from the high artistic and historical value of some of the objects which we have seen on the screen, Mr. Visser's museum is destined to have an important influence on the projects now under discussion elsewhere in various parts of the world.

The discovery of the importance of the civilizations and arts of Asia is one of the great cultural advances of Europe in the last fifty years. It not only represents a notable enlargement of knowledge, but assures a sounder view of the whole enterprise of civilization, which can never be intelligibly construed without taking into account Asia, just as it cannot be satisfactorily advanced without appropriating the cultural contributions of Asia. Asia saw the beginnings of civilization, it was the cradle of all the great religions and the source of some of the most productive artistic conceptions.

But just as we cannot understand the world as a whole by any partial view that fails to take full account of Asia, so we ought to hesitate to take a fragmentary view of Asia itself and to separate, as the speaker seems to have suggested, Western Asia from the rest of the continent. The opinion that the Western Asiatic cultures belong to the Mediterranean world rather than to the Asiatic complex was first advanced in recent times about fifteen years ago in an erudite article by Professor Troelsch. But Professor Troelsch showed himself more learned in philosophy and psychology than in the philosophy of history, where he was wanting in sufficient knowledge of specific facts to sustain his abstract thesis. Professor Troelsch had been over-impressed by the Hellenic contributions to Near Eastern art and forgot that

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in part Europe was but giving back to Asia some of the elements that she had not long since received therefrom, and that to withdraw the Asiatic factors from the classical culture would be to alter profoundly the actual content of the ancient civilization at many points. This is but one instance of a myopic classicism that has tended to limit German scholarship in the history of art and culture; a highly theoretical point of view which has been more and more profoundly criticized and rectified by facts brought to light by modern archæological research.

Troelsch's theory was accepted by Professor Becker, then Prussian Minister of Education, and used by him as an argument for the defeat of the projected Asiatic Museum at Dahlem which was Bode's last dream and to which he contributed everything, not merely in the way of ideas but even of property, that he could assemble. Becker's adverse decision precipitated a furious controversy in which Mr. Pope took a leading part, contributing articles to various German periodicals at the time. He had already in 1925 advocated a German Asiatic Museum, taking a position that was endorsed by Professors Sarre, Kuhnel, Kummel, Laufer, Pelliot, and Orbeli and Messrs. Hobson and Binyon.

The art of Western Asia, particularly as it has been dominated and repeatedly inspired from the Iranian Plateau, cannot be separated from the art of Asia of which it is an essential ingredient. It is the art of Iran more than any other one artistic factor that has bound together the various elements in the æsthetic invention of Asia. Only the Buddhist religion has played a more important part in this unification and it was itself partly Iranized in its passage through Iranian territories, while the Iranian language was the *lingua franca* of the whole of Asia, probably from Achæmenid times certainly to the Mongol invasion and perhaps long thereafter.

From the earliest periods down to recent times it is repeatedly necessary to refer to the arts of the Iranian Plateau in order to understand movements in other parts of Asia. The prehistoric painted pottery which prevailed from about 4000 B.C. into the first millennium, with local variations from China to Egypt, was primarily, according to the most learned present opinion, a development of the Caspian Plateau. It is impossible to interpret the terracotta figurines and certain of the seal motifs of Mohenjodaro without reference to earlier and contemporary objects from Persia and Mesopotamia. The art of bronze working, destined to become such an important medium of religious expression in both China and India, was first developed in Western Asia, and in all probability, according to Sir Arthur Keith and Professor Herzfeld, on the Caspian Plateau. Moreover the relations between Iran and the bronzes of China, at least of the Han period, were evidently more specific

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still, for Professor Laufer traced more than a dozen Han bronze forms to Iranian antecedents.

Nor was it only techniques and general styles that the West of Asia contributed to the rest of the continent, but many basic motifs were originated in Iran and Mesopotamia, such as the dragon and the whole world of related chimerical beasts. The sources and movements of the t'ao t'ieh are still being studied and disputed, but in the collection of Mrs. William H. Moore of New York is a Luristan bronze situla bearing a t'ao t'ieh mask which is dated, by a cuneiform inscription discovered by Professor C. G. Seligman, 960 B.C., and the figure is already so highly developed that it implies a long prior history. A whole world of Iranian decorative animal motifs was transmitted through Central Asia by the Scythic tribes, themselves of Iranian stock. Meanwhile the potters also had profited by the interchange, and there is a close relation between Parthian and Han glazes in which the ceramists of the West seem to have had precedence.

Other crafts, too, tell the same story. The history of the textile techniques in the first centuries of the Christian era involves tracing the complex exchanges between China and Western Asia, and with methods of weaving went designs, especially in the Sasanian period when Iranian patterns were imitated not only in China but also in Japan. At the same time Iranian influences were penetrating India. We now know from one of the recently discovered gold plaques that Sind was an Achæmenid province. The Asoka columns, at *Sarnath*, are regarded by many as almost pure Achæmenid with their lotus bases and capitals composed of addosed lions, an ancient Iranian sun symbol, and in several points Gupta art is surely related to Iranian.

More fundamental, however, than these specific borrowings was the basic community of religious ideas in India and Iran. The cults and mythologies of the two great Aryan religions, Hinduism and Zoroastrianism, can be fully understood only by a simultaneous study of the documents, both literary and artistic, in the two countries, and there is a wealth of ideas on the Sasanian seals still to be appropriated for enlightenment on this fascinating subject. The Indo-Iranian arts can no more be separated than can the Indo-Iranian religions and the Indo-Iranian languages.

Meantime influences from both China and India were penetrating Persia. Parthian textiles owe much to the Far East. The splendid elephants at Taq-i-Bustan and a few fine Sasanian seals are India's contribution, and while Tabari's story that Bahram Gur brought from Hind hundreds of craftsmen and artists may be apocryphal, in spirit it is just. A number of the early ceramic styles of Persia can be comprehended only in terms of their Chinese antecedents, but some of the Sung ceramic products, on the other

hand, should be compared with Persian types which, at least with our present knowledge, seem earlier.

With the Mongol invasions the bond becomes even closer. The gold-woven silks of the fourteenth century which came into Europe in considerable quantities, and are preserved in many churches and museums, are so similar from China to Spain that the same piece can be plausibly attributed to one or the other, as well as to innumerable intermediate centres both Central Asiatic and Islamic. And as the centuries pass the countries of Asia become more rather than less inseparable. Are you willing to write India's artistic history and neglect the Taj Mahal? Yet as Professor Pope has recently shown in your journal, this building depends on Iranian sources, as does a great part of Mughal art. There are paintings that can with equal verity be claimed for Persia and India, for Shah Abbas or for Akbar. There are silks and velvets and carpets which leave us embarrassed for their attribution, whether to Yazd or Kashan or to Mughal India. Was the etched ivory inlaid wood an invention of Isfahan, where it was beautifully made, or of the Indian shops which were so prolific in its production?

And throughout this period and long before, Iran had, in turn, been drawing on China. There are blue and white potteries that can be attributed to Persia only on technical grounds, and for quite a group of fifteenth-century paintings we have still not decided whether "Persian" or "Chinese" is the proper designation.

But one who wished to push to the final argument the case for Asiatic subdivision might reply that all these multiple facts represent only historical interchanges, and are to that extent mechanical rather than formative in the most significant sense. Even granting such a dubious contention, yet underneath all these parallels and interdependences there is the fundamental community of mind and spirit. Asia is sundered from Europe by a difference in artistic mentality, and Iran, India and China all share alike the Asiatic spirit. In Asia artistic presentation means an emphasis on pattern, movement and rhythm, instead of, as in Europe, on plasticity and representation. The cast shadow which is the clue to the point of view of the West is equally unknown in Persian and in Chinese painting.

For the Far East, for Iran and for the Mughal artists who derived their style and schooling from Iran, calligraphy is a supreme art of which painting is a tutelary, a conception wholly alien to the Western mentality. And how very close are the Chinese and the Persian attitudes towards calligraphy and the qualities in it that contribute to their respective pictorial arts is shown by two independent but almost identical traditions. Professor Sirén has just published translations from the Chinese concerning the art of painting, and there

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he tells how Kuo Hsi, who lived in the early eleventh century, reported that the great calligrapher Wang Yuchün liked geese because the movement of their turning necks seemed to him to resemble the movement of a man's wrist when he was writing. And the Persians say that when Mir Ali of Tabriz invented *nasta'liq*, the great Persian national script, in 1426 (823 H) he had a dream in which Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet, appeared to him and advised him to use as the model for his writing the goose.

Can we not now hope that Mr. Visser's sympathies will be sufficiently expansive to take into the plan for his museum, which he has already carried so far towards success, the brilliant and creative art of the Iranian plateau? And I am sure that you all join me in thanking him again for having presented to the friends of Asiatic art the report of an admirable *fait accompli*.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am happy to say we have here with us H.E. the Iranian Minister. Had we known he would have been here, we could not have arranged for better homage to be paid to his country. I wonder whether His Excellency would be good enough to say a few words.

H.E. THE IRANIAN MINISTER: It is very kind of you to ask me to say a few words. It has been a great privilege and pleasure to be present to-day and to listen to such a remarkable lecture and see such interesting slides. I have followed with very great interest what Mr. Visser has said, and also Dr. Ackerman's observations. I am not learned in these matters, and it would be presumption on my part to enter into the details, but, of course, I am very much tempted to support the view of Dr. Ackerman.

I may say that we in Iran also are making great efforts to establish a Museum of Art in Teheran. The museum has actually been built, and very fine collections are being set up, and we shall add what we get from the excavations in various parts, because they have been undertaken on a very scientific scale. The museum will be very rich in specimens of the Sasanian and also the modern times, because art is yet living in Iran. It is still inspired by the traditions of the past. We hope very much that the museum will be a source of attraction, and that many people of the West will come and see our works of art.

I must again thank the Society for having been kind enough to invite me to come here, and also thank His Excellency for his very kind hospitality. (Applause.)

THE CHAIRMAN: I am sure you will all wish me to support Sir Atul Chatterjee's vote of thanks both to the lecturer and to the host and hostess of this evening. It is by no means the first time that the very charming châtelaine of this Dutch stronghold on the Thames has raised its portcullis and allowed us to enter across the drawbridge. I am sure we all welcome the

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opportunity very much, not only because we have always enjoyed the occasions which brought us here, but because of the charm and culture of this essentially Dutch *milieu*. As for His Excellency, I am afraid it would be almost impertinent if the Vice-Chairman of this Society were to start casting bouquets at a Vice-President who takes his task so seriously. As you all know, His Excellency has for many years been, not only one of our members, but a Vice-President, and a very active one. He comes to our gatherings and takes part in supporting our work, not merely when his diplomatic responsibilities might seem to dictate it, because some Dutch interest was also involved, but on many other occasions as well. We cannot be too grateful for the support which His Excellency has given us, because our two countries have not only important common interests throughout a large part of Asia, but also derive their responsibilities from very similar ideals. It is, therefore, most valuable that on both sides of the North Sea we should have opportunities of learning what has been worked out on the other. There is for us a dual advantage in seeing what the Dutch are doing with regard to some of their problems which are also ours.

They tackle these problems in the systematic manner of which we have seen an example today in Dr. Visser's comprehensive way of treating what seemed a simple question, namely, his own museum in Amsterdam. But there is another thing which makes it valuable for us to know what the Dutch are doing. This is that many of their problems, great and important as they are, are not quite so vast, are less intricate and sometimes less pressing, than those which face the British Empire. The result is that they can attempt to find the solutions with a little more breath to spare, and therefore in many cases with rather more method. Whilst the Dutch solutions may not always be capable of being adopted unaltered, it is very useful to have somebody else show us what can be done, if one can do it along ideal lines. Hence our gratitude for opportunities such as these, which bring nationals of both countries together on common ground and among common interests. (Applause.)

H.E. THE NETHERLANDS MINISTER: The châtelaine of the stronghold on the Thames says that I have to say a few words. I can only say the distinguished speakers of to-day have tried to satisfy our thirst for knowledge of Asiatic art, now we will try to satisfy your more material thirst by asking you to come downstairs into the dining-room. (Laughter and applause.)

## A NEWLY DISCOVERED MONUMENT OF PRIMITIVE KHMER ART

BY ROBERT DALET

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WHEN studying a map of the Geographical Survey of Indochina, my curiosity was aroused by the word "Ruins" at the point of intersection of 13g88 and 113g485 (sheet entitled Kompong Chhnang). As no such monument had hitherto been described in this region I decided to leave Phnom-Penh on Sunday, September 25, 1932, to investigate whether there really were ruins at that spot.

After a drive of three hours by car, I was held up on the road to Snocrou by the floods which at times cover the plains in the vicinity of Tonlé Sap. I hired a sampan without much difficulty, and after a thirty minutes' sail landed at Kompong Prah- the "sacred shore." This spot, which is inhabited by fishermen, is a small mound some thirty-odd feet high, probably a remnant of the great ancient causeway which seems to have skirted the south-western shore of Tonlé Sap and the Great Lake. This mound, apparently artificial, is crowned by a modern pagoda of no great merit.

On the northern slope, however, I was much surprised to find two brick towers, one of which was still in excellent preservation. These are two *pràsât* in the primitive Khmer style, which is so interesting because it is more closely connected with Hindu art than the style of the classical period, and is practically unknown to tourists for the reason that it scarcely occurs in the Angkor group, and does not present such imposing masses as is the case with classic Khmer art.

The two sanctuaries face five degrees west of north, a direction which must have been governed by local conditions that are not apparent at the present day. It does not correspond with the line of the causeway, which runs from south-east to north-west. It was, perhaps, governed by some cult connected with the navigation of the Great Lake.

The most striking tower, about 33 feet high, is of brick, with bays, or false-bays, of sandstone. It is rectangular in shape, about 16 feet by 12 feet, the longer sides running north and south. It is open on the north side and has (see Fig. 1) a doorway and three false doorways. Only the door-jambs, the small columns, the lintels and the false door leaves (on the southern,



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eastern and western sides) are of a fine grey sandstone. The door frames are mitred outside (an arrangement rather unusual in this form of art) and squared inside. On the front they are bordered by a fillet about 2 inches wide (see Fig. 3). The false door leaves are made in one piece of sandstone: on either side of the stout flange they have long panels. On the east and west these panels are ornamented with simple designs of foliage, and on the south with large roses inside circles (Fig. 2). Each panel is bordered by a thick fillet.

The flange has four square projections. That on the southern opening shows (from the top downwards—Fig. 2) a bull (Nandi?); a woman, seated, holding shoulder-high the ends of a garland which hang down to form her seat; a man, seated, with one hand on the ground and the other breast high; and at the bottom a lion seated on its haunches. Between these projections are recessed rectangular panels carved with leaves in volutes.

The small round columns (Fig. 3) are of rather delicate workmanship. The base and the capital are unequal in size. They both have the bulbous vase-shaped form in "constant-direction," which is characteristic of this art, and rest on a base of lotus, likewise in "constant-direction," preceded and followed by a pronounced necking, in the middle of which protrudes a ring studded with dotted buttons.

Under the base of the column is a decorated cylindrical ring resting on the cubical block, which is ornamented in the middle of the visible faces by an antefix of foliage. The capital, which is larger, has above the curved surface, already described, another lotus cushion carrying a plain doucine divided by a thin annulet. A ring, similar to that at the base, completes the column.

The shaft proper is stopped at the top and bottom by a cylindrical ring, the decoration of which varies not only in the same column but also from one column to another, and consists of either palm leaves or entwined foliage. Between the rings at each end is one in the middle and two very simple rings in between. That in the middle, slightly larger, has a row of pointed studs set in foliage; those in between have triple rows of slanting or horizontal leaves. The four plain sections are relieved by a narrow projecting annulet. The plant ornamentation is only on the visible surfaces, the other sides of the columns (see, in Fig. 2, the column on the right which is partly broken) displaying merely the general scheme of the mouldings. The columns support a lintel decorated in the Intermediate Style II, rather unattractively and in low relief.

A small simple floral motif at the centre interrupts the garland of foliage; the latter is turned up at either end into a volute, the lower curve of which rests on some chiselled mouldings with a small antefix in the centre.

Underneath the garland hang loops of foliage curving towards the centre,

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and above there is a row of slanting leaves turned outwards. The lintel is bordered at the top by a row of beads between fillets. The lintel of the northern door (Fig. 4), which has peeled, or been chipped, shows only the overhanging *ovolo*. Above, an *ovolo* in high relief is decorated with a series of rather flat floral motifs separated by small triangles. This *ovolo* has above it a flat band. The missing sculpture has been replaced by a plaster ornament of foliage enclosing a praying figure on a lotus base. This restoration may be fairly old, as the foliage has preserved its elegance.

The decorative scheme of the entrance, which stands out from a slight recess, consists of pilasters ornamented with rectangular palm motifs. These pilasters are bordered by plain bands and have, on the level of the decorative lintel and from bottom to top, the following details : a band in high relief, a fragment of a palmette in low relief projecting slightly in plan on the shaft, and a flange supporting a detached *ovolo* decorated with lotus-petals. Above, projecting still further from the level of the portion of the pilaster already described, there is a half floral motif. The fillets at the border are here finished off with an inner row of beads.

The actual capital of the pilaster is of the same character as the cornice of the *pràsât*, and consists of a rather wide flange and *ovolo* decorated with half floral motifs separated by triangles like those on the upper frieze of the lintel, but less prominent. The fillet and *ovolo* are on the level of the upper frieze.

Above these pilasters and the lintel runs an overhanging moulding with a series of pointed beads and a double row of bricks (Fig. 5). This row supports, or has fastened to it, five antefixes of leaves on a moulded base. The terminal antefix tops the capitals of the pilasters. The three others are uneven ; that in the middle, which projects, is similar to those over the capitals, while those between are raised to a higher level.

Behind this ornamentation there is a moulded portion, of which the upper fillet supports the pediment shaped like an inverted, flattened U. This pediment should have been crowned by a prominent antefix probably presenting a miniature of a building. There are signs still visible of this having been broken off (Fig. 1). The antefix has not remained in position on any of the sides. The pediment consists of a flat band bordered by rows of beads carved with central rings, the outer row projecting, the inner standing back ; a plain fillet runs round the top of the pediment. The pediment contains three miniatures of buildings in a rather dilapidated condition. These appear to be planned in the shape of a cross. On top of a high foundation in the form of a pedestal rises a ground-floor chamber, having a porch with pilasters bearing a light lintel ; above there is another storey surmounted by a large bulbous

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crowning piece, the wings of which show, in profile, a crowning motif less pronounced than that in the middle.

There are small antefixes at the corners of the building. The body of the principal *pràsàt* is very simply decorated (Figs. 2 and 3). The pilasters at the corners are rather larger than those of the bays, and their size is increased by a row of dotted buttons inside the fillets of the border. These reappear without projecting beyond the first moulding of the base and of the cornice (Fig. 2). At the cornice the pilaster is continued beyond the second moulding, which is an *ovolo* with lotus and stamens.

The pilasters at the sides of the bays are decorated only on the long sides—i.e., on the east and west. The half pilasters of the bays that stand back are plain on every side. The spaces between the pilasters are without ornament of any kind.

The base of the edifice, which is buried underground to the level of the entrance thresholds, is rather damaged. It consists of (Fig. 2) a series of mouldings which, taking them from top to bottom, are as follows: a plain fillet; a row of short and broad balusters; a large detailed *ovolo* ornamented with large lotuses between two mouldings, the upper showing large stamens, the lower with a string of dotted beads; a row of square-shaped flowers with four petals; a fillet with dotted beads; a succession of double rectangles resting on the *doucine* of the invisible foundation wall.

The corners under the pilasters show a remarkable appliqué of a floral motif set upon a pedestal. The half pilasters from which the door bays are detached have the same floral motif on pedestal on a level with the base of the building.

On the pilasters of the door bays this antefix is altered (Fig. 3 to the left and Fig. 6) and shows a divinity (*nāga* King ?) seated in a pose like that of a royal personage at his ease. The right hand is placed on the right knee, which rests on the ground, and the left forearm rests upon the left knee, which is bent upwards, the hand hanging down. This figure, which is well posed, is surmounted by a seven-headed *nāga* hood. The antefix of the base of the pilaster on the south side of the eastern bay can only be roughly traced.

The cornice is decorated in the same manner as the base, but the arrangement of the ornaments is different (Figs. 1 and 2).

Above the first fillet there are: a row of square rosettes; a big *ovolo* moulding with lotus between listels, of which the lower one is plain and the upper one is decorated with stamens; a row of balusters; a second *ovolo* between plain listels and decorated with a row of birds with outspread wings, probably sacred geese (*hamsa*).

Terminating the cornice is a band which, at each corner of the building,

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bears a large brick with a small monolithic horn forming a slight antefix (see Fig. 1, right-hand corner).

The tiers, three in number, are in a good state of preservation. Their ornamentation is rather more complicated than that of the body of the building. A diminutive terrace in the form of a *doucine* connects the upper ledge with the base of the tier. It is decorated at the corners and in the recesses with floral antefixes.

The little foundation wall has pilasters decorated with square flower motifs in every recess and a small antefix at the corners.

The base, body and cornice all reproduce on a simpler and smaller scale the decorations of the ground floor, but with the addition of "flying pavilions" between the pilasters. These miniature buildings appear to be of the same composition as those of the tympanum of the pediments in the main buildings.

The frontages have a pediment shaped like an inverted U fixed against the little terrace which supports the upper floor and bears a prominent antefix, which likewise is in the form of an inverted U. This antefix serves to cover the base of the fore-part of the next tier.

The two other tiers, somewhat smaller in size, are arranged in the same way. The roof, which had to be cleared of the vegetation hiding it, unfortunately looks as if it had been restored during a period of decadence. But such traces as have been found, particularly on the long side, suggest a saddle-roof.

This theory is supported by the discovery during excavation of a large number of terminals in the shape of tall, slightly truncated cylinders carrying a half sphere at their thicker end; and also by two important fragments found on the terrace of a neighbouring modern building which look very much as if they had been the crowning pinnacles on the gables of the topmost tier on the narrow sides of the building.

These interesting fragments (Fig. 8) are about 3 feet high. Their present base is a cubical block grooved between a plinth and a chamfer, both plain—a form identical with that of pedestals with a groove or a curved die. Unfortunately this base is not cut from the same stone as the pinnacles, so it may only be the pedestal of a deity which might have been thus used at some undefined period. Accordingly this fragment does not throw any sure light on the date of these grooved pedestals, which are relatively rare and apparently archaic, and seem to have been met with hitherto only in Cambodia.

Into this pedestal is fitted a piece of sandstone of bulbous shape, the vase-shaped outline of which recalls the base and capital of small columns.

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The lower part of the bulge is decorated with a row of simple lotuses. Small mouldings decreasing in size complete the pinnacle to the top.

The interior of the *pràsàt* is a plain rectangular hall without any ceiling cornice or corner stones, with a corbelled vault above.

The second tower, about 10 feet to the west of the first and 3 yards distant, has remained in the rough state.

It is a square building of a little over 9 feet with blank doorways of brick. It was simple in plan, but only the ground floor and part of the first floor remain, the rest having collapsed. The door has only part of its frame left, which was square, and over the real lintel the relieving arch, which is trapezoid, bears a horizontal block of sandstone.

The false doorways are of plain brick, as also are the door leaves, lintels and pediments. What remains of the upper floor points to four false openings.

Inside, the cella has a cornice of flat stones with holes (to support an awning). Later, clearance work revealed a bench at the end of the hall.

A hurried examination, made under the direction of M. H. Parmentier, Chief of the Archæological Service of the É.F.d'E-O., three weeks after the discovery of these towers, revealed the steps of the north entrance to the principal sanctuary.

In the ruined tower one could see, just appearing above ground, the tops of six stones ending in half-spheres. Further search brought to light a considerable number of images and of roof pinnacles. Among these figures, all of which are mutilated, the following belong to primitive Khmer art :

The bust of a woman in schist with damaged breasts, the stumps of four arms, and narrow hips. A small bust of Viṣṇu with four arms, likewise in schist. Two *lingas* with a threefold section, showing the egg-shape encircled by a thick fillet which is characteristic of this art ; one is well preserved, the other is more worn. The other images unearthed probably belong to the first period of the classic art. Among the most interesting are :

A female statue of which the head, arms and feet are missing ; the bust has small breasts, and is good. The striped sarong is tied by a waistband consisting of a double row of oval-shaped discs which the overhanging upper part of the dress covers in front. A long asymmetric flap has a design of transverse undulating stripes.

A male statue, which seems to be the counterpart of the one just described, is without arms or legs. The severed head has straight eyebrows, eyelids with double outline, and lips deeply undercut. The head-dress is an ornamented tiara surmounted by a high cylindrical bun of hair which widens somewhat at the top. The striped costume is held in position by a girdle

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ornamented with pendants and ending in flaps in the shape of double hooks.

Two *dvārapālas* with heads, arms and legs missing (Fig. 7). Their only garment consists of a loin-cloth with a flap of curled ribbons on the left thigh. The belts are simple and decorated with half moons facing each other. The busts are of fine workmanship. On one, at the level of the belt, is a portion broken off, this being the position of the two hands folded on the stomach. The two hands of the second *dvārapāla* still hold a long mace which ends in a trident at the level of the sternum.

In the modern pagoda there was found an interesting female statue, perhaps Umā (Fig. 9). The head is severed from the body, and the arms and legs are missing. The clothing consists of a striped sarong with a long flap held in place by a decorated belt. The upper part of the dress is turned over in front. The bust has lost its breasts. The face, which has a sweet expression, shows thin lips and a slightly aquiline nose. The eyes are open, and the eyebrows but slightly curved. The high head-dress of hair consists in front of a small bun, surmounted by a crescent and surrounded by locks arranged in loops. The ears, with distended lobes, have broken ear-rings which appears to have been round. The height of this statue is 40 centimetres (about 16 inches).

In the main tower are two very interesting finds : a stone for grating sandalwood, the first specimen of the kind found in Cambodia ; though we have since catalogued several others. This piece consists of a circular tablet, showing in section an inverted, slightly truncated cone. It rests on a pedestal of four cylinders side by side, which widen out towards the base.

The second object, the most remarkable of all those discovered at this spot, made up of two blocks fitted together, is probably a *Śivapāda* with the footprints of Śiva hollowed out on the upper portion of the second block. The lower stone is cylindrical and has three rows of sculpture on its face, and stairways on the axes (Fig. 11). The plinth is plain, and above it runs a row of lions shown in profile and facing each other in groups of three. They are separated by pilasters with floral patterns, the one in the middle being the most noticeable. The second row, which is separated from the first by a flowered border, is similarly decorated. Above, resting on a narrow fillet, are six human figures facing to the front seated in Indian fashion, in the attitude of prayer, under trefoil arches fringed with small leaves. Floral motifs fill the spaces between the niches. The stairways of three flights between side supports have the risers decorated with lotuses.

On either side of the stairs are carved small figures seated with the ease and dignity suggestive of a royal personage. Each is between two stylized

## A Newly Discovered Monument of Primitive Khmer Art

palm-trees. The upper portion of the stone has a slightly raised edge. In the hollow part near the edge thirty-two small square holes have been cut, and in the centre a larger one. These socket-like holes appear to have been intended to hold the sacred "deposit," consisting of pieces of the precious metals.

The second block, which fits into the hollow in the first block just described, has three recessing tiers, and stairways at the axes (Fig. 10).

The plinth, the surface of which is slightly undulated, is decorated with lotuses on their stamens. Each quarter bears three squatting figures in the attitude of prayer on a lotus pedestal. They all turn in the same direction and are separated by palms. At each end of the row of figures is a lion, with its back against the side support of the staircase at the ends of these groups. The three tiers recessing upon each other are similar. The staircases have their risers decorated with lotuses, and the landings show a slightly undulating step. They are enclosed between stamped plinth blocks similar to those on the lower stone.

The top has on its face, which is slightly recessed, a fillet ornamented with small lotuses (?), and in the centre are delicately carved the two feet of the deity, the size of human feet.

This religious symbol, which is infinitely rarer than the feet of the Buddha, is probably of primitive Khmer art. A similar idol was discovered in 1912 at That Ba Chong in the province of Stungtrang by MM. Finot and Parmentier. That fragment, which was not decorated, bore an inscription which appears to be of a recent date (*Bulletin de la Commission Archéologique de l'Indochine*, 1912, p. 184, Plate I.).

Another representation of footprints similar to that of That Ba Chong exists, it appears, at Pràsàt Srei Krup Léak (Aymonier, *Le Cambodge*, vol. i., p. 287), and bears a large mystic sign (*om*?). That monument is probably the Prah Theat Trapeang Cherei No. 121 of the descriptive inventory of Cambodian Monuments by L. de Lajonquière.

The only inscription discovered in the Pràsàt Kompong Prah consists of two signs incised in the upper hollow of a pedestal placed against the eastern wall of the subsidiary tower.

The principal tower is still used for the Buddhist service, and, apart from the restoration of the decorative northern lintel, the sinking of the bases of the towers, and the unfortunate repair of the roof (which, however, may have prevented still further deterioration through the action of the weather), has not suffered very much from its proximity to the Buddhist monastery.

The sanctuary is in form like that of the Pràsàt Phum, Pràsàt No. 153 of the inventory of L. de Lajonquière, and has in addition false bays, but the pediments are much smaller in size (*L'Art Khmèr primitif*, by H. Parmentier,

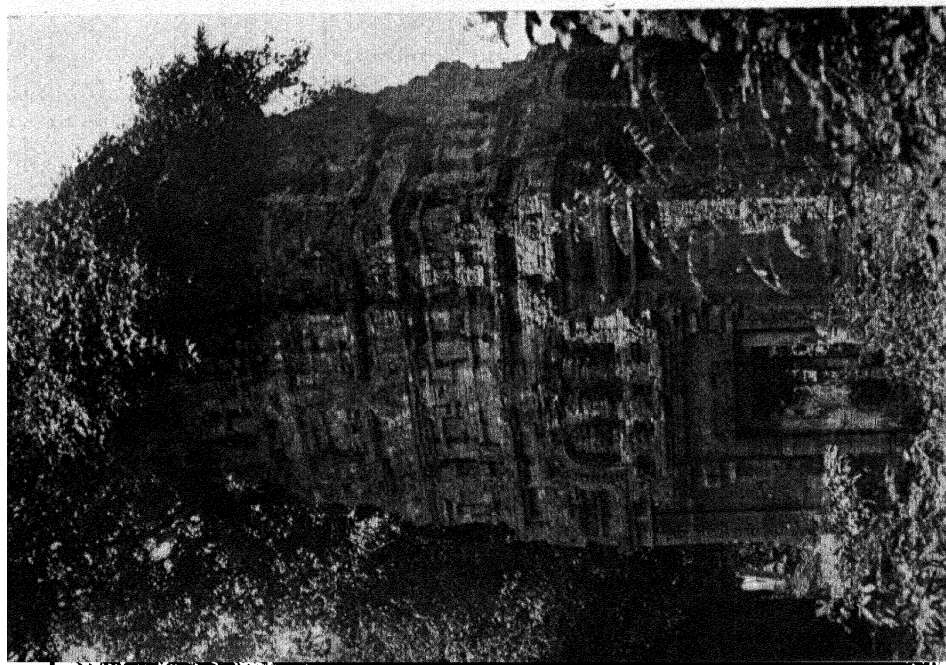


FIG. 1.—THE PRINCIPAL TOWER.

A newly-discovered monument of primitive Khmer art.



FIG. 2.—SOUTHERN FALSE DOOR.

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FIG. 3.--THE SOUTHERN PORTION OF THE EASTERN FALSE DOOR.  
A newly-discovered monument of primitive Khmer art.



FIG. 4.—THE NORTHERN DOOR SEEN FROM THE WEST.  
A newly-discovered monument of primitive Khmer art.



FIG. 5.—THE OVERHANGING MOULDING OF THE WESTERN FALSE DOOR.

A newly-discovered monument of primitive Khmer art.





FIG. 6.—ANTEFIXES OF THE SOUTHERN PILASTER OF THE EASTERN FALSE DOOR.  
A newly-discovered monument of primitive Khmer art.



FIG. 7.—DVĀRĀPĀLAS UNEARTHED IN THE SECOND TOWER.  
A newly-discovered monument of primitive Khmer art.



FIG. 8.—A CROWNING PINNACLE.

A newly-discovered monument of primitive Khmer art.



FIG. 9.—FEMALE STATUE FOUND IN THE PAGODA.

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FIG. 10.—UPPER PART OF A ŠIVAPĀDA.

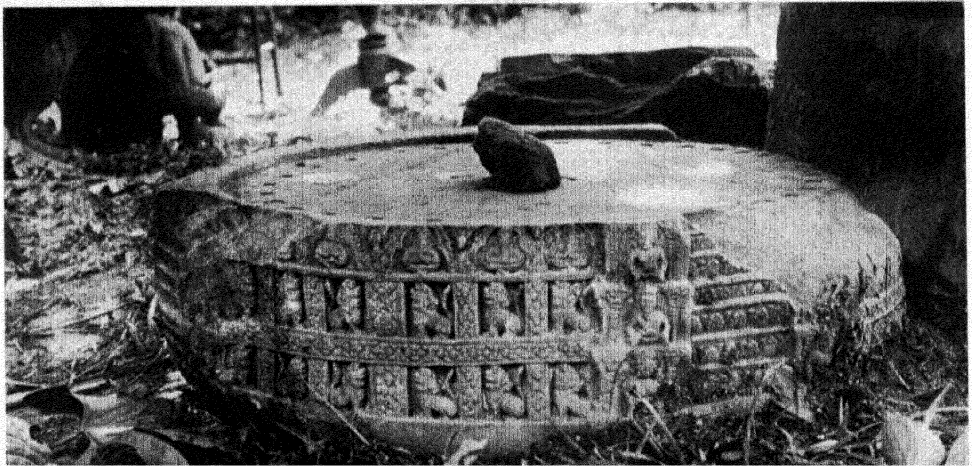


FIG. 11.—LOWER PART OF A ŠIVAPĀDA.  
A newly-discovered monument of primitive Khmer art.



## INDIAN INFLUENCES IN CHINESE SCULPTURE\*

BY JAMES H. LINDSAY, I.C.S. (RETD.)

TEN years ago Professor Pelliot gave a lecture to the Society on "Indian Influences in the Early Chinese Art in Tun-huang," in which he explained how Buddhist art in China had been influenced, in the first instance, by the art of Gandhara, and how later, during the T'ang dynasty, other influences had come straight from India proper. In the discussion that followed Sir Louis Dane showed from his personal experience how great had been the influence of Greece on the art of Gandhara.† Today I shall endeavour to trace these influences from both Gandhara and India to China, giving examples of sculpture to illustrate how the art of Greece, after uniting with that of India, has influenced Buddhist sculpture in China for hundreds of years.

The first move came from the West at the time of the campaign of Alexander the Great, who in 329 B.C. reached the eastern limits of his conquests and planted colonies along the bank of the Iaxartes (Sir Darya). Greek culture flourished in these colonies even after they were cut off from European Greece at the break-up of the Macedonian Empire. The traditions of the Bactrian Greeks penetrated as far as north-west India. Gandhara, situated at the north-west corner of India, merits special attention as the meeting-place of Greek and Indian cultures. Commanding the entrance to India from the north-west, it was overrun by conquering nations six times during the three and a half centuries preceding the Christian era. At the start of this period it formed part of the great Persian Empire till this was conquered by Alexander the Great. The Greeks in turn were suppressed by the Indian Mauryan dynasty, of which Asoka is the best-known ruler. Later the Bactrian Greeks reconquered the country, but they in the first century B.C. were driven out by a combination of Scythians and Parthians. Last of all came the Kushans, whose rule spread from Delhi in India across the Pamirs to the Taklamakan desert and the borders of China. With these conquests three different artistic cultures were associated—Persian, Greek and Indian. Each left its influence on the land and its people, but India's contribution was the greatest because its artistic culture was reinforced by the Buddhist religion.

\* Lecture delivered before the India Society on January 16, 1936. H.E. the Chinese Ambassador presided.

† INDIAN ART AND LETTERS, vol. ii., pp. 20-34.



## Indian Influences in Chinese Sculpture

The mixture of cultures can be seen in the photograph of a panel found at Muhammed Nari, near Peshawar (Fig. 1). The group at the base of the panel and several of the pillars are typically Greek. One of the pillars, however, is a Persepolitan column showing the Persian influence. The figure of Buddha in the usual seated attitude of an Indian ascetic is completely Indian. Not only the pose, but the rounded limbs, which in our eyes give a somewhat effeminate appearance, are in accordance with Indian tradition and taste. It does not seem that the sculptor had ever seen a lotus, for Buddha looks most uncomfortable, as if sitting on a thistle. The arches are worthy of attention, as the horseshoe arch came from the centre of India, and it, as well as the triangular arch, made their way to China.

Although Buddha died *circa* 483 B.C., the Buddhist religion remained as nothing but a small sect till its adoption more than two hundred years later by Asoka, the great king of the Mauryan dynasty, whose organizing genius spread the religion all over India and also into neighbouring countries. It was accepted by the people of Gandhara by the second century B.C., if not earlier, and the numerous Buddhist remains found in this country to the exclusion of anything of the Hindu Brahman religion testify to an intense Buddhist fervour. It was from this place that Buddhism spread across Asia, overcoming the greatest obstacles on its way to China.

The obstacles were certainly immense. In the first place the high range of the Hindu Kush had to be surmounted, and then the Pamirs, that great watershed dividing the East from the West. The passes in these mountains are above snow-level, or about 16,000 feet in height. When the mountains were left behind, to the east there stretched the Taklamakan desert, flanked on the north by the T'ien Shan mountains and on the south by the K'un-lun mountains, both precipitous and snowclad. It is a country without rain, where caravans go from oasis to oasis along the foot of the mountains on either side. Not till after a journey of 900 miles is the Nan Shan range reached and the first signs of a moist air current from the Pacific can be felt. Although the obstacles to this route had defeated all Western nations, the Chinese overcame them and made contact with the West. In the time of the first Han dynasty at the end of the second century B.C. Chinese generals had gradually extended the empire to cover the fringes of the desert, occupying Kashgar and even crossing the Pamirs to the Iaxartes, the site of the colonies of Alexander the Great. We are accustomed to think of the Chinese shutting themselves up in their country, trying to avoid contact with an outside world, but this is a modern idea. In olden times they showed great powers of sanely organized adventure. By this route came the silk of China to Alexandria and Rome, while in return the Chinese obtained the much prized

## *Indian Influences in Chinese Sculpture*

horses of the West. Communications between East and West were thus opened by the Chinese by the end of the second century B.C. But the Chinese were not interested in art itself, and the journey of artistic ideas from the west to the east would have been long delayed had there not been the vehicles of Buddhism to transport it. The drivers of the vehicles were the Kushans.

As noted above, the Kushans were the last power to occupy Gandhara at the beginning of the Christian era, and their great king, Kanishka, considered himself another Asoka in his zeal for the spread of Buddhism. They sprang from a nomadic tribe formerly settled in Kansu in West China, which, after many years of fighting with the Tartars, migrated to the West, and ultimately occupied the basin of the Oxus, the old home of the Bactrian Greeks. There they were left in peace, and turned from wandering nomads into a settled agricultural people. They gradually extended their rule, till by the first century of the Christian era it reached from the middle of India on the south to Yarkand and the desert region to the east. The bridge between India and China was thus formed. Having little art of their own, the Kushans adopted the art of Gandhara, that mixture of Greek, Indian and Persian arts. They early became, like so many other nomadic races, enthusiastic converts to Buddhism. Sir Aurel Stein has excavated the sites of their settlements along the base of the K'un-lun mountains to the borders of China, finding documents in their Kharoshthi script as well as in Sanskrit. Le Coq has similarly traced them along the base of the T'ien Shan. They give in their books many illustrations of the Græco-Buddhist art found in these places, which date from the first three centuries A.D. Examples of this art are well known, as it has been fully described by Foucher in *L'Art Gréco-Bouddhique du Gandhara*. As the name implies, it was a fusion of Greek and Indian art.

The date of the arrival of Buddhism in China is not known, for the arrival of a new religion was not the sort of thing that found an entry in the old Chinese annals. In the K'ang-hsi encyclopedia, published about the end of the seventeenth century, are various traditions connected with the event. The earliest is that during the reign of the first Ch'in Emperor, about 220 B.C., Shê Li-fang and other monks arrived in China. The Emperor put these strange beings in prison, but during the night a golden man forced open the doors and allowed them to escape. Although there is just a possibility that some heroic missionaries of the Asokan age reached China, no corroboration of this story has yet been found. The usual story, and one that is found in most history books, is placed about 280 years later, in A.D. 68. The Emperor Ming had a dream about a golden man sixteen feet high, who came to the palace flying through the air. When the dream was revealed to the Council the next morn-

## Indian Influences in Chinese Sculpture

ing, a member said that there had been in India a wise man named Buddha, and that the golden man was he. The Emperor then sent an embassy to India, which brought back Buddhist scriptures and a standing figure of Buddha. This story is a legend of the second century A.D., but we do know that the introduction of Buddhism had occurred before the year A.D. 68. From a casual reference in an old historical text, we know that a Chinese prince was pardoned in A.D. 65 because of his piety in performing Buddhist worship. This occurred in the State of Ch'u, which lay about halfway between modern Shanghai and Peking, and shows that by the middle of the first century A.D. Buddhism had become an established religion in East China.\* Probably it began to reach China about the beginning of the Christian era through the efforts of Kushan missionaries, and there is some documentary evidence in support of this.

As has already been noticed, Sir Aurel Stein found that the Græco-Buddhist art of Gandhara spread eastwards to the confines of China; but unfortunately there is no trace of Buddhist art in China before the end of the fourth century A.D. These traces consist of a few bronze statues of no great significance. Buddhist art in China begins a century later during the reign in North China of the Northern Wei dynasty, a nomad race who conquered North China and later became enthusiastic converts to Buddhism. There may have been, and probably were, sculptures before this time, but nothing of this has been found. Probably they were destroyed in the many iconoclastic persecutions of Buddhism that took place. The figures that remained are those carved out of the solid rock in the cave shrines at Yün-kang, Lung-mên, T'ien-lung Shan, and other places. The idea of the cave shrine appears to have an Indian origin.

The earliest cave shrines of which we have knowledge are those in Egypt, from whence they spread to Persia, and then to India in the time of Asoka. Many such temples were constructed in India, the best known, though not the earliest, being those at Ajanta, where the side of a hill was attacked and excavations made with regular doorways cut out of the solid rock. These caves are lovingly preserved by the Nizam of Hyderabad and his archæological department. The entrance to a much earlier shrine at Bhaja, near Poona (Fig. 2), shows that the rock was carved to resemble exactly wooden posts and beams. The idea was to make the entrance as similar as possible to that of the ordinary temple made from wood, as all early temples were. Inside was a chamber vaulted like a cathedral, with perhaps an avenue of pillars, while in the middle would be a large ornamented stupa, the whole hewn out of one solid rock. Similar caves were excavated along

\* Yetts, *The Eumorfopoulos Collection*, vol. iii., p. 1.

## Indian Influences in Chinese Sculpture

the borders of the Taklamakan desert, and we find the first in China at Tun-huang, the place where the caravans from China started their journey across the desert.

There is an account, translated by Chavannes, of the starting of these cave shrines at Tun-huang, on a stele erected in A.D. 698, on which it is recorded that in A.D. 366 Lo-tsun, with a pure and tranquil heart, marched with pilgrim's staff across the plains and through forests to this hill. There he saw a vision of a thousand Buddhas, and started to make a cave shrine. After him came one Fa-liang, coming from the East, and made a second cave.\* From this record we learn the date of the first cave shrines at Tun-huang, and that in all probability the work was started by a pilgrim from the West, who would be well acquainted with such shrines along the borders of the desert, if not in India. Nothing remains of these early caves, but Tun-huang became a great Buddhist centre, and the numerous caves that still exist have yielded up vast stores of manuscripts in Chinese, Sanskrit, and other languages, rock sculptures, and wall paintings, all marvellously preserved in that dry climate. Professor Pelliot has already told the India Society that the foreign influences at work in the early period of the work of Tun-huang were those of Gandhara.

As has been mentioned above, Buddhist art in China begins with the Northern Wei dynasty, which belonged to a Tartar tribe from Eastern Mongolia and reigned in North China from the end of the fourth century to the middle of the sixth. They extended their rule as far west as Tun-huang in A.D. 439, when the Annalist records that 30,000 families were removed from Tun-huang to the Wei capital at P'ing-ch'eng in North China, about 160 miles west of Peking, a distance of about 1,000 miles. At this time the ruler was an enemy of Buddhism, and the eight years ending A.D. 452 saw one of the greatest persecutions of Buddhism in China, when temples, images and sculptures were destroyed all over the country. His successor was a fervent Buddhist who led a revival. At this revival it is highly probable that many of the families who had come from Tun-huang were eager to make cave shrines similar to those at their old home, while they might well reflect that at the time of persecution isolated images in a wooden temple were much easier to destroy than those hewn out of the solid rock. A site was found at Yün-kang, ten miles west of the capital, and work was soon started. Writers tell us that the shrines were made firstly to spread the power of the Buddhist religion, secondly to make atonement for the persecution of the Buddhist

\* Chavannes, "Dix Inscriptions Chinoises de l'Asie Centrale d'après les Estampages de M. Ch.-E. Bonin." Extract from *Mémoires présentés par divers savants à l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, vol. xi., second part, pp. 250-252.

## Indian Influences in Chinese Sculpture

religion, and thirdly to obtain benefits for the ancestors of the royal family—all religious ideas. It is also possible that they were stimulated by the reports of Fa-hsien, the first Chinese Buddhist pilgrim to India, who returned with Buddhist scriptures and images in A.D. 414. We are also told in some old records that some foreign monks arrived at the Wei capital in A.D. 455 with three Buddha images which were much admired. They also may have had something to do with the work of the caves. As in India, the caves had a central square pillar highly ornamented. Some of the figures carved were of enormous size, 30 to 40 feet in height, while the surrounding walls and ceilings were richly decorated. The entrance to the cave was often carved to resemble the entrance to an ordinary house, as is shown in the illustration of the entrance to a cave at south Hsiang-t'ang Shan, near An-yang, constructed just after the Wei dynasty.\* The imitation wooden beams hewn out of the solid rock recall similar work in India. On either side of the door are the doorkeepers or *dvārapālas* set to guard the shrine. These doorkeepers also can be traced back to an Indian origin, for they are representatives of a religion older than Buddhism or even Hinduism, the old Animist religion still existing among certain aboriginal tribes in India. Spirits inhabiting trees, rivers or hills were enrolled under the standard of Buddha generally in a menial capacity. They were often portrayed in old Indian sculptures as attendants on Buddha or as guardians at the doors of the temples, and given fierce or even comic faces. The Chinese adopted the idea but showed the demon-like quality of the guardians in their own way.

Inside the caves at Yün-kang the niches for the large Buddha images were surrounded with figures of Buddhist saints and flying *devatās*, such as are met with in Indian Buddhist sculpture. In one cave are scenes from the life of Buddha, one of which has always captivated the imagination, his renunciation of home and a life of ease, to go out into the world to seek enlightenment.† The gods are seen holding up the hooves of his horse so as to muffle their tread. This should be compared with the portrayal of the same scene at Amaravati probably in the latter half of the second century A.D., the original of which can be seen on the staircase of the British Museum (Fig. 3). If all the unnecessary figures with which Indian art used to crowd its pictures are eliminated, the pictures are essentially similar. It looks as if somebody who had seen the Indian carving had had something to do with the designing of that at Yün-kang. This is not an impossible con-

\* Tokiwa Daijo and Sekino Tadashi, *Shina hukkyo shiseki* (Buddhist Monuments in China), vol. iii., pl. 103.

† Shinkai Taketaro and Nakagawa Tadayori. *Unko Sekikutsu* (Rock Carvings from the Yün-kang Caves), pl. 69.

## Indian Influences in Chinese Sculpture

jecture, as Amaravati, lying on the Kistna, about 250 miles north of Madras, was a port of embarkation on the voyage to Ceylon, Sumatra and China.\*

The rich decoration of the ceiling and walls in Cave IX. at Yün-kang† consists of *devatās* dancing round a lotus in a manner reminiscent again of Amaravati, while the carving of the lotus and the curious dwarf-like supporting figures take us back to the old sculptures of the second century B.C. at Bharhut in Central India. The splendid elephant on which is riding a godlike being calls to mind the early Buddhist carving (Fig. 4) at the entrance to the cave shrine at Bhaja, which belongs to the first or second century B.C. India is again presented to us in Cave VII., where we find the god Siva with four arms and three heads. The presence of a Hindu god in Buddhist carvings is explained by the fact that the earliest Buddhist stories describe Hindu gods acting as attendants on Buddha. Indra and Brahma were the first to receive into their hands the infant Buddha at his birth. They were said to be in attendance on him on many other occasions. It was a small step to transform a personal attendant into a Buddhist saint or *Bodhisattva*.

Many other Indian motives are to be found during this period such as the *kirtimukha* mask, the palmette design common at Bharhut and Sanchi, guardian figures armed with the trident of Siva, the haloes of the Buddha or his saints covered with flames like the haloes of the Gupta period in India, the arches from Gandhara both triangular and horseshoe. Above all is found again and again the traditional figure of Buddha, seated as an Indian ascetic, clothed in the Grecian mantle. The walls of the caves were crowded with images and inscriptions, many of the latter surviving on the hard rock of Lung-mên. Such inscriptions indicate the spirit that inspired the making of the images. "Ma Fu-t'o, a disciple of Buddha, and Dame Liu, his wife, wishing that they may enjoy tranquillity, respectfully made this niche containing a figure of Amitabha." "Cho Hsiang-chêng, a disciple of Buddha, having recently recovered from a malady in his foot, reverently made these two images, one of the Saint Kuan-yin, Saviour from Affliction, and the other of the Saint Ti-tsang. He dedicates these with his whole heart for the benefit of his forbears, male and female, to the seventh generation."‡

So far examples have been taken from the period of the Northern Wei dynasty in which the sculptural work has been of a somewhat primitive type with Indian influences coming mainly from Gandhara. These may be compared with examples of the mature period of Chinese sculpture during the T'ang dynasty, which lasted from the beginning of the seventh till the end of

\* Foucher, *L'Art Gréco-Bouddhique du Gandhâra*, p. 650.

† Shinkai Taketaro and Nakagawa Tadeyori, *loc. cit.*, pl. 102.

‡ Yetts, *loc. cit.*, p. 21.

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the ninth century. This was the most glorious epoch in the history of China, when her rule and influence extended in every direction, and all the peoples of the world came to her court at Ch'ang-an. During this period hundreds of pilgrims went to India, and intercourse between the two countries was frequent, not only by the north-west corner of India, but also through Tibet and Nepal, and probably most of all by the sea route by Canton, Sumatra, and Ceylon. Special monasteries were built in India for Chinese pilgrims, while Indian merchants were to be found in Ch'ang-an. Pilgrims brought back with them not only copies of the Buddhist scriptures, but also images. These images came not from the Græco-Buddhist School of Gandhara, but from the heart of the country. In them the drapery is almost entirely subordinated to the figure underneath, which is rounded and fully modelled, giving it the effeminate look of the statues of the Gupta period in India. This effeminacy is at times accentuated by a thin waist and lateral tilts to the trunk. The new influence is no longer Græco-Buddhist, but almost entirely Indian. This influence is so conspicuous in the work of this period at T'ien-lung Shan that it has been suggested that there must have been a group of Indian craftsmen at work on these cave shrines. The number of examples of this type is very great, and several may be seen in the Chinese Exhibition. The finest example is undoubtedly the figure of the headless *Bodhisattva* (Fig. 5), belonging to Mrs. J. D. Rockefeller, jun., standing in the middle of the room in the exhibition devoted to Buddhist sculpture. This figure has been said to combine the flowing draperies of Greece, the rounded limbs of India and the vitality of China. The statue, however, seems entirely Indian, and may be compared with the torso in red sandstone in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Fig. 6), which comes from Sanchi, and belongs to the fourth or fifth century, at least two hundred years earlier than the figure from T'ien-lung Shan. The similarity between the two figures is very striking.

So far I have been dealing with examples of Chinese sculpture obviously copied from Indian models or inspired by men who had seen such models. There are, of course, many cases even in Buddhist sculpture where the work is entirely Chinese and owes nothing to India except the subject portrayed in the work. As in other arts, so in sculpture, the Chinese have taken ideas from other countries and adapted them with wonderful results to their own culture. This may be illustrated by the treatment of the great conflict between Buddha as he sat under the *Bodhi* tree and Mara determined to prevent Buddha from obtaining enlightenment. If we look at the representation of this scene from the walls of a cave at Ajanta, a copy of which is in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Fig. 7), we see Buddha surrounded by tempting maidens and various threatening men and monsters, but none of them looking

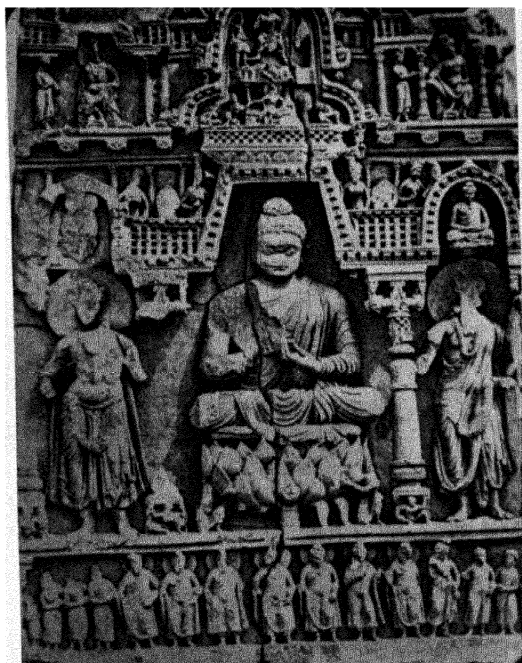


FIG. 1.—PANEL FOUND AT MUHAMMED NARI,  
NOW IN CENTRAL MUSEUM, LAHORE.

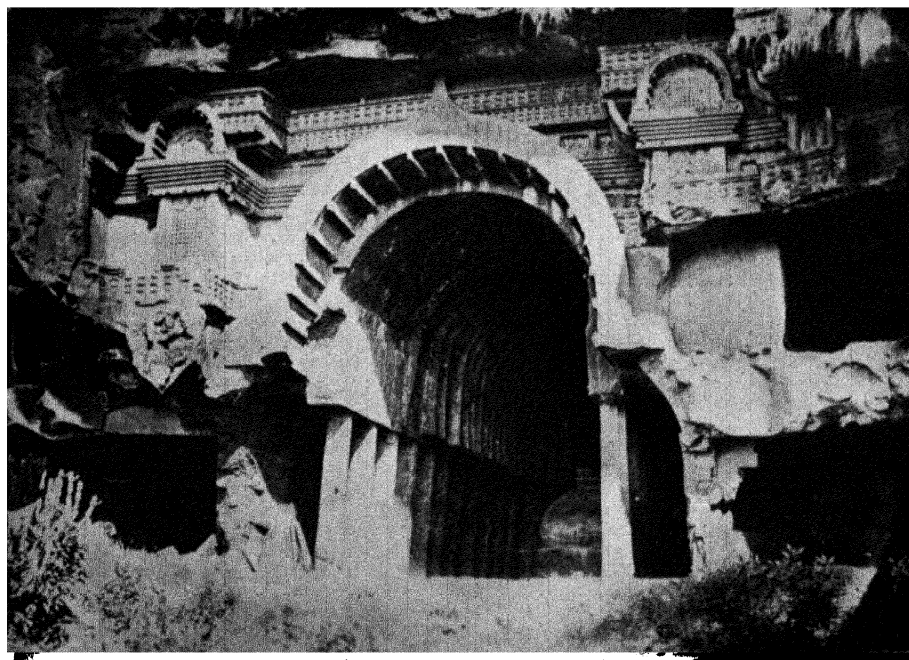


FIG. 2.—CAVE TEMPLE AT BHAJA.

Indian Influences in Chinese Sculpture.

*India Office photograph.*

To face p. 138



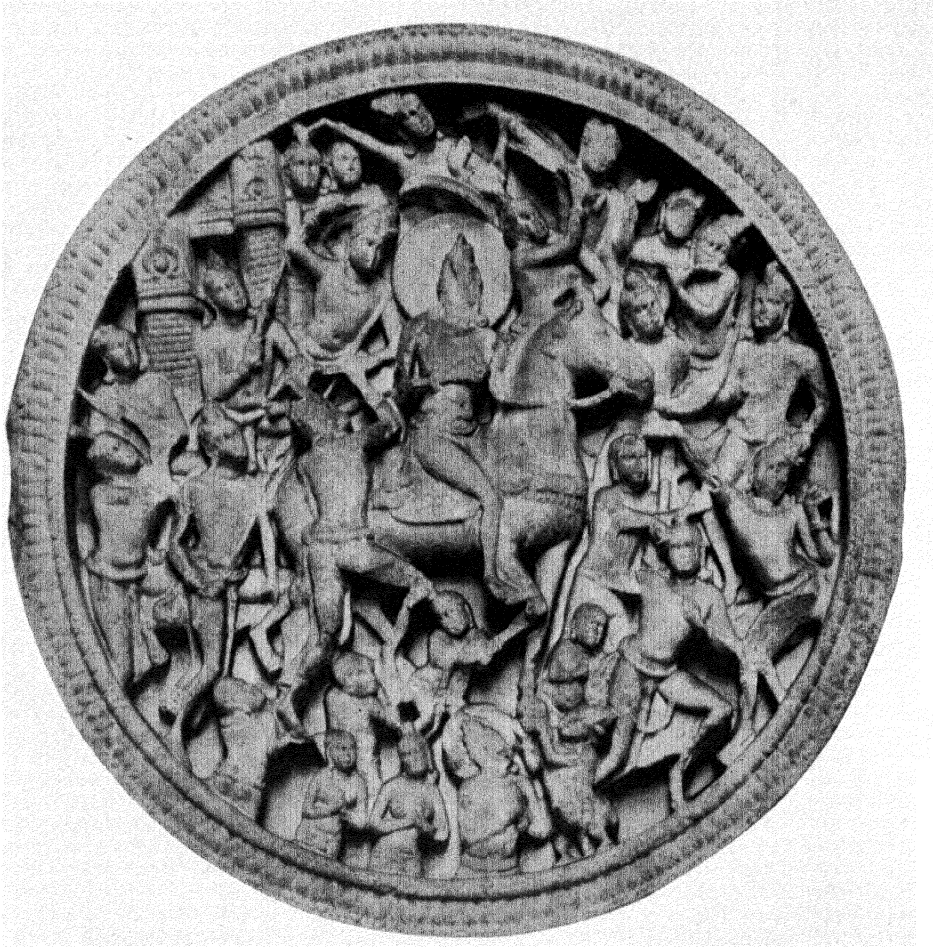


FIG. 3.—SCENE FROM THE TEMPLE AT AMARAVATI.

*By permission of the Trustees of the British Museum*

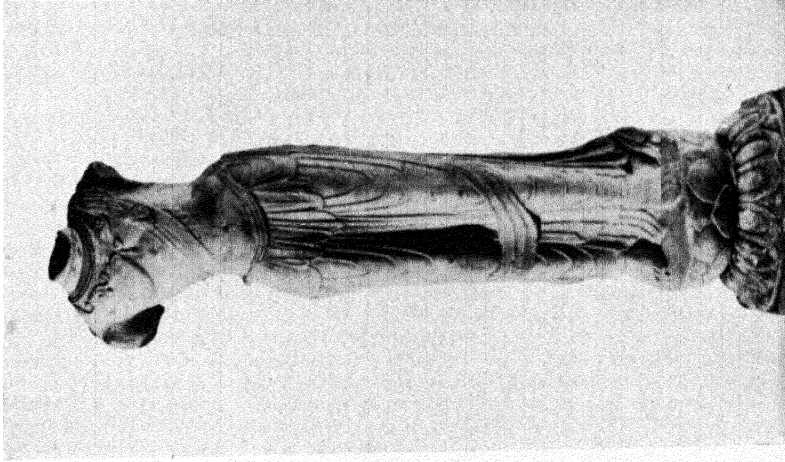


FIG. 5.—HEADLESS BODHISATTVA FROM  
T'IENT-LUNG SHAN.

*Property of Mrs. J. D. Rockefeller, Jun. (Published by permission.)*



FIG. 4.—ENTRANCE TO THE CAVE  
SHRINE AT BHAJA.

*India Office photograph.*

PLATE IV



FIG. 6.—TORSO FROM SANCHI : VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM.  
*By permission of the Victoria and Albert Museum.*



FIG. 7.—SCENE FROM AJANTA : VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM.  
*By permission of the Victoria and Albert Museum.*

### ***Indian Influences in Chinese Sculpture***

as if they were really any danger to the large figure of Buddha sitting calmly in their midst. This may be contrasted with a representation of the same scene from a panel at the foot of a pagoda at Shê Shan not far from Nanking,\* where, apart from the figure of Buddha, all the occupants of the stage are entirely Chinese. The Buddha sits quietly in the pose of contemplation while the attacking forces are grouped around him with great artistic skill. There is a vitality, reality and unity of design in the Chinese picture that is lacking in the Indian one. The Chinese had made the story their own while retaining the accepted figure of Buddha, just as European artists kept the figure of Christ in His Eastern robes while all the others in the picture might be European.

In this brief review I have tried to show what interesting parallels and fascinating contrasts exist between Indian and Chinese Buddhist sculpture. Study on these lines is at the initial stage, and I am sure there is a fruitful field for research open to those interested in the subject.

\* Tokiwa Daijo and Sekino Tadashi, *loc. cit.*, vol. iv., pl. 9.

## SOCIETY'S VISIT TO THE INDIA MUSEUM IN LONDON

BY JOHN DE LA VALETTE

IN recent times the conviction has spread among those responsible for the administration of our great London museums that their task has two distinct, but equally important, aspects. On the one hand there is the duty, long recognized, of making the magnificent collections under their care serve the austere purposes of their own highly expert staffs in their never completed researches, and of placing the material helpfully at the disposal of scholars and qualified students from without. On the other side there has grown up the determination to interest the general public, especially the rising generation, in the broad aspects of human activity and endeavour which the museum specimens, rightly interpreted, illustrate. This latter service is becoming increasingly recognized as not the least valuable to be expected of our museums. It demands of their leaders and staffs, in addition to knowledge and understanding of the collections from a scientific angle, a generous appreciation of their place in human endeavour generally. Especially is this the case where the collections illustrate human conceptions and activities remote from those with which the average visitor is familiar through his own experience or his national traditions.

Formerly it could not be said that the India Museum, which is a branch of the Victoria and Albert, showed signs of adequate appreciation of this need for the intelligent popularization of its treasures which the parent institution has long and successfully put into practice on its own side. The present Director, Mr. K. de B. Codrington, is fully imbued with the influence of the new spirit.

One of the striking impressions which members of the India Society formed last July when, by courtesy of the Director, they were privileged to visit, under his guidance, the collections that were then still in course of rearrangement, was the fact that by grouping the various classes of exhibits in chronological periods in proximity to each other, there inevitably grew up in the visitor's mind a coherent picture of the kind of people that lived in the country and century concerned. It is only when one begins to visualize the arts and crafts and the religious monuments of the past, or of distant places and peoples, as the activities of human beings fundamentally akin to ourselves, and differing only in detail, that any genuine interest for them can be roused among those not expert in the subject to which the exhibits relate.

### ***Society's Visit to the India Museum in London***

Such a treatment of our public collections relating to India is bound to stimulate a better understanding between Britain and India. The laudable efforts of the present Director of the India Museum to this end should receive in full measure the official support they merit and need. For it is unquestionable that the accommodation now allocated to the Museum is inadequate to display its valuable material effectively in accordance with the principles I have outlined. It is, therefore, to be hoped that the rumoured prospect of providing this Museum with more suitable premises may soon be an accomplished fact. There could be no more opportune time to render outstanding service to the Empire, by contributing towards a more generous understanding and a richer appreciation of India by the remainder of the Empire, than the coronation which will draw visitors to London from all parts of the world.

All who are concerned not merely with Indian art, but with India as a great and noble part of the Empire, must hope that Mr. Codrington may have been enabled by then to display his fine collections with such effect that they will not only draw numbers of London's coronation guests, but send them home with a vivid impression of the magnificent heritage of culture and civilization which India has contributed to the British Empire.

### **“MATTER, MYTH AND SPIRIT”**

IN the review of Mrs. Dorothea Chaplin's book with the above title, which appeared in the last issue of *INDIAN ART AND LETTERS* (page 59), the publisher's name should have been given as Messrs. Rider and Co. (second edition), the first edition having been out of print.

## **SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF ASIATIC ART (HOLLAND).**

### **EXHIBITION OF ASIATIC ART IN THE "STEDELIJK MUSEUM," AMSTERDAM.**

**JULY 5 TO OCTOBER 4, 1936.**

THE Society of Friends of Asiatic Art has not only founded its Museum, but from the beginning of its activity in 1918 it has always been zealous for the enrichment of the private collections of Asiatic art. In this way interest in the art of India and East Asia has grown rapidly in Holland. At the same time the collections increased to such an extent that it has been possible to organize an exhibition of great importance. Only in order to fill up a few gaps was it found necessary to enlist the aid of museums. The illustrated catalogue contains 556 items. Of course, it was not possible for this exhibition to give a complete survey of the extensive domains of Asiatic art. Notwithstanding the development of private collections, Holland cannot compare with countries like England, France and Germany, but along with Sweden she takes an important place, not only in regard to the art of the Dutch Indies, but also of British India and of Eastern Asia. The quality of many objects collected in recent years is on a level with the collections of those three great countries.

In selecting the objects for exhibition, the Committee has taken into account the exhibits in the Museum; no object was chosen the category of which was already represented in the Museum. Special attention was paid to the æsthetic qualities of the exhibits.

For this particular exhibition the Municipal Council of Amsterdam gave the use of seven rooms in the "Stedelijk Museum" which communicate with those of the Museum of Asiatic Art.

The exhibition was opened at the same time as the remarkable summer exhibition entitled "Two Centuries of English Art." H.R.H. The Duke of Kent, after his inaugural address at the latter, paid a visit to the summer exhibition of the "Friends of Asiatic Art."

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